MENNONITE MEDICINE IN RUSSIA

1800 TO 1930

By Helmut T Huebert

Published by Springfield Publishers of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Huebert, Helmut T., 1935-
Mennonite medicine in Russia: 1800-1930 / by Helmut T. Huebert

Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-920643-15-0

1. Mennonites-Russia-History. 2. Medicine-Russia-History.
I. Title.

BX8119.R8H845 2012 289.7'47 C2011-907104-5

All cartography by Helmut T Huebert

MENNONITE MEDICINE IN RUSSIA: 1800 TO 1930

Copyright@ 2011 by Springfield Publishers, 6 Litz Place, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R2G 0V1, telephone (204) 334-4728, E-mail htdhuebert@gmail.com

All rights reserved. With the exception of brief excerpts for review or very limited copying of materials for strictly private use, no part of this book may be reproduced without written permission by the publisher

International Standard Book Number 978-0-920643-15-0

MENNONITE MEDICINE IN RUSSIA
1800 TO 1930

INDEX

I Introduction....5
- Map: Mennonite Colonies in Ukraine and Russia....6
- Health Among Russian Mennonites in the 1800s....7
- Modern Medical Care in the 1800s....9
- Vital Statistics....12

II Hospitals....13
- List of Hospitals....14
- Individual Hospitals
  - Alexandrabad....16
  - Berdyansk *Deutsches Krankenhaus*....18
  - Bethania Mental Hospital....20
  - Chortitza Hospital....27
  - Jakob Esau Hospital (*Deutsches Krankenhaus*)...28
  - Lepp & Wallmann Hospital (*Fabrikkrankenhaus*)....30
  - Maria School for the Deaf and Dumb (*Marientaubstummenschule*)....31
  - Melitopol Field Hospital....33
  - Morija Deaconess Home....35
  - Muntau Hospital....38
  - Ohrloff Hospital, Molotschna....43
  - Tiege Hospital, Sagradovka Colony....46
  - Waldheim Hospital....48

III Doctors....51
- Medical Schools in Russia....52
- Mennonite Medical Students.... 54
- List of Medical Doctors....55
- Individual Biographies
  - Claassen, Nikolai David....60
  - Claassen, Rudolf Abraham....61
  - Dirks, Peter Peter....63
  - Dirks, Wilhelm Peter....64
  - Dueck, Peter....65
  - Duerksen, Gerhard David....66
  - Dyck, Franz Isaak....68
  - Dyck, Johann Jakob....69
  - Dyck, Peter Isaak....70
  - Esau, Jakob Jakob....72
  - Friesen, Nikolai (Nicolaus)....74

Hamm, David Abraham....74
Hausknecht, Abram David....75
Hottmann, Theodor Johann....77
Isaak, Elisabeth Johanna....78
Isaak, Johann Johann....79
Kroeker, Susanna....81
Loewen, Margaret....82
Martens, Tusnelda....83
Martins, Anna (Anya)....85
Meder, Hermann Hermann....86
Mierau, Peter Heinrich....87
Neufeld, Gerhard Jakob....89
Neufeld, Nikolas Jakob....94
Peters, Peter....95
Rakko, Wilhelm....96
Rempel, Dietrich Dietrich....95
Sawatzky, Peter Jakob....97
Sawazky, Woldemar Peter....99
Schellenberg Bernhard Paul....100
Stieda Wilhelm....101
Stoesz Alfred Peter....102
Tavonius, Erich Alexander....104
Tavonius, Erika....109
Thiessen, Isaak....111
Toews, Aron Johann....113
Warkentin, Heinrich Andreas....114

IV Nurses and Midwives....115
Nurses - List and a number of biographies....116
Midwives - List and a number of biographies....126

V Other Medical....138
Dentists, Technicians, Pharmacists, Medical Administrators

VI Medical Orderly Service (*Sanitaetsdienst*)....143
General History....144
List of *Sanitaeter*....149
Photographs....155

VII Bone-Setters and others....159
List of Bone-Setters and a number of biographies
Other Treatments - Mud Baths, Mineral Water Spas, Homeopathy

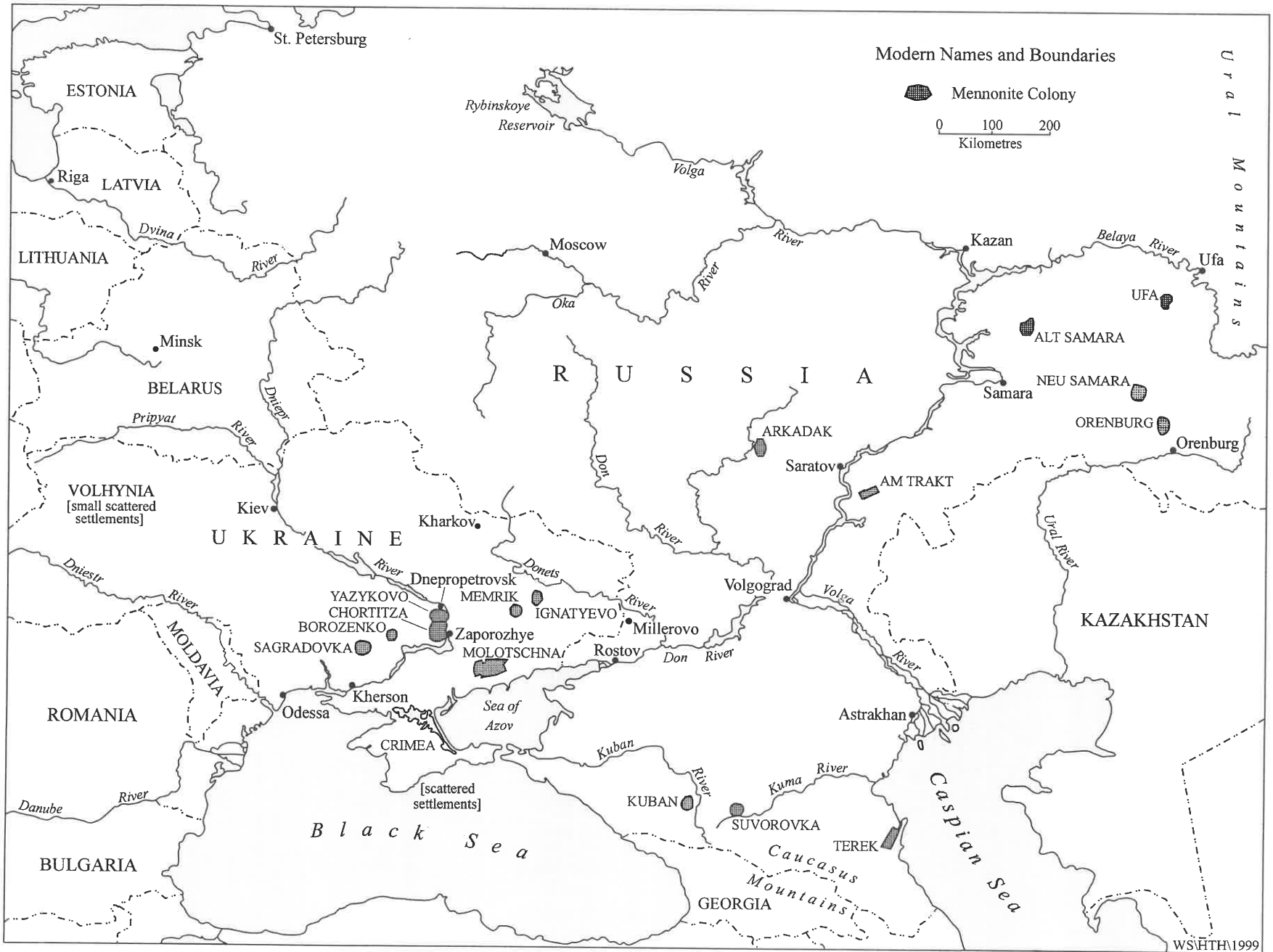
VIII Epidemics and other Diseases....167
Epidemics and Childhood Diseases
Typhus, Tuberculosis and Trachoma

Maps - Molotschna, Halbstadt, Muntau....176

I

Introduction

1. Map: Ukraine and Russia
2. Health among Russian Mennonites in the 1800s
3. Modern medical care in the 1800s
4. Vital Statistics



Mennonite Colonies in Ukraine and Russia
[Not all of the smaller colonies shown]

HEALTH AMONG RUSSIAN MENNONITES IN THE 1800s

Most Mennonites in the 1800s lived in relatively closed communities, far removed from official medical care. It was not until late in the century that trained medical personnel and hospitals became easily available to them. The almost universal substitute was a strong belief in the efficacy of self taught bone-setters and a wide variety of home remedies

One should not expect medical care in the Mennonite Colonies to pre-date developments which first came to the attention of the scientific world sometime later. Sterile technique, for example, especially during childbirth, was not commonly known until the 1870s. Tuberculosis (consumption) (*Schwinsucht*) was not accurately diagnosed until late in the century, when the organism was finally isolated, and yet was not effectively treated until surgery was used, and then the advent of antibiotics in the 1940s.

Among Mennonites there was little knowledge of the nature of any communicable diseases or preventative medicine. In some instances with severe epidemics the schools were closed, not to prevent the spread of disease, but because there simply were not enough healthy students available to fill the classrooms. Contact with sick people was not curtailed, so that direct spread of disease often occurred, if not by personal contact then through contact with their clothing or bed linen.

Common home remedies consisted of various compresses used to treat almost everything, including cancer. Hot bran and buttermilk compresses were high on the list of medications. Salves and oils were used to treat almost anything. They were particularly efficacious in treating normal people; this often included something like the correction of the normally large head of infants.

There was no practice of birth control; pregnancies were frequent, and continued until the end of the woman's child-bearing years. The average mother had between 10 and 12 children, although 16-20 were not unusual. Midwives were used, but were often untrained. Criteria seem to have been that they were female, and that they had assisted in at least one previous delivery. Sterile techniques were not known, so the incidence of childbed (puerperal) fever was high. All in all, the chances of dying during childbirth or shortly thereafter were great. Even for the surviving mothers there was a high toll on personal health.

Surely it must have occurred to some, if they thought at all, that a decrease in the number of pregnancies would have decreased the number of disabilities, even fatalities, among women. In searching through the literature, and inquiring of others familiar with the subject, this idea has not been mentioned. If the thought did surface, it certainly was not publicly expressed. It seems that to "be fruitful and multiply" took precedence over all other considerations. In a certain sense this could be called murder - both on the part of the unrestrained husbands and the non-admonishing ministers!

Infants and young children frequently died; family statistics show this trend. A few examples illustrate the trends. A woman age 47, had 16 children, 6 still alive. A man age 82, had 10 children, 2 still alive. A man age 67, had12 children, 4 still alive. Problems associated with childbirth were often fatal, as were infectious childhood diseases such as diphtheria and scarlet fever. The annual population growth was still 3-4%. It would have been much higher if it were not for the high infant and children's mortality.

Blood-letting was used by some of the more sophisticated bone-setters, for almost anything. This treatment was actually fairly standard medical practice into the early twentieth century (in some regions into the 1920s), also for almost any condition.

There developed among the Mennonites in Russia a class of people who considered themselves to be "elite," above the level of the ordinary farmers who lived in the colony villages. This included many estate owners and prominent industrialists. They tended to marry largely within their own class, to keep the money within their own circle of friends and relatives. Unfortunately this degree of inbreeding increased the number of children born with congenital (birth) defects. A family with six children might have one or two with abnormalities. Some of these people recognized the problem, and even allowed teachers to marry into the "elite" clan to broaden the gene pool.

Among many Mennonites alcoholism was a major problem. When the Mennonite Brethren bought the pub in Rueckenau to convert it into a church there were some who valued the symbolism. Others were annoyed, because they would now have to find another place where they could get drunk.

"*Anfechtung*" (technically means temptation) denoted a broad spectrum of mental illness from mild depression to severe psychosis. Generally psychiatric conditions were assumed to be spiritual problems, and were therefore treated by reading scripture and prayer. Bethania Hospital, established early in the twentieth century, was a step forward in the management of mental disease, in the recognition that it was actually a physical disease.

Death was common with serious illness among the Mennonites in Russia, occurring usually within 8-14 days; the specific disease was often unknown. There was a sense of fatalistic realism, also some sense of resignation. After all, if there is not much that could be done, why struggle against the inevitable.

Sources:

Huebert, Helmut T *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Alexandrovsk, p 41,
"The four adult daughters and one son all married into the industrial elite families, thereby keeping the money among the "Niebuhr Dynasty"

Toews, John B, Childbirth, Disease And Death Among the Mennonites in Nineteenth-Century Russia, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 60 (1986), pp 450-468
This article relies on the diaries of David Epp, Chortitza, his son Jakob Epp, Hebrew Colony, and Dietrich Gaeddert, Rueckenau

MODERN MEDICAL CARE IN THE 1800s

Modern medical care is different than folk or quack medicine in that it is based on science, as the science is understood at the time. Ideally treatment is based on scientifically proven diagnosis and remedy. Sometimes repeated efficacy has been shown, even though the process is not completely understood. This is then called "empirical" treatment. Usually in time the mechanism of the disease is understood, so the treatment becomes scientifically verifiable. As more knowledge is gained the understanding of the disease and its treatment improves and may change with time.

Quack medicine, such as chiropractic, does not work that way. A theory is expounded, and treatment designated according to this theory. It does not change over time, and works largely because many symptoms can be alleviated if the patients believe strongly enough, whether or not the actual treatment had anything to do with it. Chiropractic was invented by one man in 1895. His assumption was that almost all diseases were caused by improper alignment of the spine, and could be corrected by manipulation. Even perfectly healthy people could be kept healthy in this way. As of now, after 115 years, this theory and the treatment has not changed. The irony is that among Mennonites, the educators, who should value science and rational thought the most, and should recognize fraud, are among the most firm believers. Presumably because faith is important in their spiritual lives, they indiscriminately apply this rationale to medical diagnosis and treatment as well.

Some aspects of legitimate medicine as it was known in the 1800s, need to be compared with the treatment Mennonites received during this time.

Tuberculosis was the single most important cause of adult death in the 1800s. It was characterized by wasting (loss of weight), fever and cough. Most common in the lungs, it could also involve other organs such as kidneys, bowel and bones. Spinal involvement often resulted in deformity, with accompanying paralysis. Because of the gradual wasting it was called "consumption," in German "*Schwinsucht*." Treatment initially was purely symptomatic, and mostly consisted of bed rest. The actual cause of the disease was not specifically known until Robert Koch isolated and identified the Tubercle Bacillus in 1882, and effective treatment was not available until the advent of antibiotics in the 1940s. The world-wide trend of this disease was also seen among Mennonites; many of the descriptions of disabled and dying patients were classical examples. Well known English poet, John Keats, died of tuberculosis on 23 February 1821 at the age of 25. Frederic Chopin, famous Polish composer, died in 1849 at the age of 39 of pulmonary tuberculosis. Eduard Wuest, who played a part in revival among the Mennonites, died in 1859 at the age of 41. It is very likely that he died of tuberculosis.

Blood-letting was considered to be an effective treatment for almost any condition, from antiquity until early in the twentieth century. Most likely the principal basis for its perceived efficacy was that the patient was weakened by the anemia, and did not complain as loudly. No doubt psychological propaganda also played a part. Removing so much blood must have some benefits! It is likely that President George Washington was actually killed by this method of treatment. He had a "cold." His doctors let blood. He did not feel better, so more blood-letting. He became weaker and weaker, and despite repeated blood-letting, did not improve. Eventually he died, from his treatment induced anemia. In time science did catch up with blood-letting, and proved that it actually most often was a detriment to health. In this day there are only a few conditions which are

thought to improve with blood-letting, where there is truly too much blood: polycythemia, hemochondromatosis and occasionally very persistent heart failure.

Infection was not understood until well into the nineteenth century. Ignaz Semmelweiss, in 1861, proved that prevention of the use of contaminated gloves greatly reduced the incidence of puerperal fever after childbirth. He found that with medical students, who went straight from autopsies to deliveries without changing their gloves, the rate of infection was much higher than with midwives, who had ordinary clean hands. His implication that the dirty gloves caused the infection was not popular!

Surgery was performed in the 1800s, but it was expected that usually there would be an accompanying infection with considerable amounts of pus. Joseph Lister pioneered the principle of prevention of infection of wounds by preventing microorganisms from contaminating them - by the use of carbolic acid spray. He successfully treated an open fracture in 1865, and published a scientific paper describing this finding, "On the Antiseptic Principle in the Practice of Surgery." Killing of the organisms was then followed some years later by actually eliminating them from the surgical field, "asepsis" being the ultimate advance. This allowed a complete change in the prognosis of surgical treatment: one could actually depend on surgery, without having to factor in the inevitable disability of infection!

The role of microorganisms in many diseases was inferred, but difficult to prove specifically. This was often complicated by the fact that the carrier system was complex. Endemic typhus, for example, is caused by an organism *Rickettsia typhi*, which is carried by lice which are carried by rats. Prevention of this condition therefore required a number of steps. Human dwellings had to be clean, hopefully eliminating the rats. This would eliminate the lice which would eliminate the disease carrying organism. Another type of typhus is carried principally by human lice. Mennonites were often infected during the Russian Revolution and the Civil War, since many bandits and soldiers with whom they were in contact carried lice.

Some vital diagnostic tools were not available anywhere in the world until late in the nineteenth century. Microscopes and resultant techniques are essential to identify various microorganisms, which then can result in specific therapy, such as appropriate antibiotics. Xrays were first discovered by Wilhelm Roentgen in Germany, who demonstrated them in December of 1895. This was one technique which was widely accepted, particularly to visualize bones, and was soon widely used. At least three Mennonite hospitals in Russia had Xray equipment by 1910 or 1911. As is typical with new discoveries, it was then assumed that Xrays could be used to treat anything and everything. After some time it was discovered that too much radiation could cause leukemia, so Xrays were then used on a more rational basis.

Abdominal pain has long been a difficult medical problem. Obviously people had acute appendicitis throughout history, but it was not recognized as a specific condition until the late nineteenth century, what the diagnosis was, and that something could be done about it. Charles McBurney first described acute appendicitis in 1889. Frederick Treves of London had enough faith in this new diagnosis and its treatment to do an appendectomy on King Edward VII only a day before his coronation in 1902. Since that time right lower quadrant abdominal pain has been easily diagnosed as appendicitis. Right upper quadrant pain, especially with jaundice, of course meant gall bladder trouble. Both of these conditions could therefore be treated by Mennonite doctors in Russia, but only after the turn of the century. Surgery of all kinds became more popular only after the

development of effective anaesthesia and after the proper control of post-operative infection.

The health of the average Mennonite family would probably have been better than most of its neighbours. Their houses were clean and well kept, with few rats as a result. Their diet was good, since meat, vegetables and fruit were freely available. As a whole they would not have lived in crowded conditions, which often enhance the spread of disease.

This has been a very brief overview of some of the factors which had an impact on the lives of many people during the 1800s. It will be recognized that since that time many aspects of legitimate medical care have advanced, hopefully improving the general health of the population at large, and virtually eliminating some of the more serious diseases, such as poliomyelitis and small pox.

Sources:

Duffin, Jacalyn, *History of Medicine*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1999, many pages

Garrison, Fielding H, *History of Medicine*, W B Saunders Company, Philadelphia and London, 1929, many pages

VITAL STATISTICS

Much can be learned about the lives of ordinary people by reviewing some of the general statistics of the period. Each birth represents a happy event in a family, just as each death is a tragedy. In reviewing the overall trends we receive an impression about what people expected of life, and what their attitude to life may have been.

Fairly accurate Molotschna vital statistics are available for the mid-nineteenth century. Total population of the colony in 1836, 32 years after its establishment, was 9,945. This more than doubled by 1859, to 23,274.

Birth rate varied from 44.2 to 55.0 per thousand population per year. By comparison the birth rate per thousand population in Canada was 15.1 in 1982, slipping to 10.28 by 2009. The birth rate in the Molotschna was therefore at least four times that of the current Canadian average. Birth control of any kind was probably seldom practiced, the "normal" situation being an addition to the family every two or three years throughout the entire child-bearing years of the wife - regardless of the jeopardy to her health and well-being.

Between 23.4 and 29.7 people died per thousand population each year in the Molotschna, compared to the Canadian average of 7.87 per thousand per year in 2009. The death rate was therefore three or four times as high as we currently experience in Canada. It must be remembered that infant mortality was quite high, most families having one or two infants who died at an early age. Epidemics of infectious diseases such as diphtheria and typhus could sweep away entire families. Conditions such as tuberculosis were often routinely fatal. Then of course, child birth quite often caused the death of the mother and child.

Population demographics according to age are important. Children under the age of one year represented 4.7% of the Molotschna population, only 1.46% in Canada. By school age there is a drop to 3.3% of the population in the Molotschna, likely due to a high infant mortality. The *Arbeitsfaehige* (employable), usually including those between 14 and 60 years, constituted 49.7% in the Molotschna, but are 66.2% in Canada. While some individuals reached a ripe old age in the Molotschna, it was unlikely more than 5%; in Canada it is 13.4%. These figures show the high infant and child mortality present in mid-nineteenth-century Molotschna, with the consequent lower number of adults and seniors.

Sources:

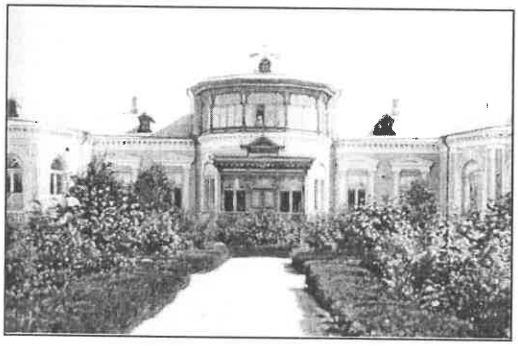
Huebert, H T, *Hierschau :An Example of Russian Mennonite Life,* Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg. Canada, 1986, pp 72, 73

Statistics Canada

II
HOSPITALS AND OTHER SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

Muntau Hospital operating room

Bethania kitchen



Ohrloff Hospital about 1914

LIST OF HOSPITALS
(and other similar institutions)

(asterisk* signifies that there is also an additional more extensive report)

In the early and mid nineteenth century there were no hospitals in the Mennonite colonies, so it is presumed that when more intensive care was required, Mennonites went to hospitals in nearby large cities such as Simferopol, Odessa, Kharkov or Zaporozhye. The establishment of Mennonite hospitals began late in the nineteenth century, at the same time that Mennonites themselves began studying legitimate medicine.

Alexandrabad *- private sanatorium established 1904, bought by Niebuhr in 1910, abandoned with the Dniepr Dam flooding 1927

Berdyansk* - *Deutsches Krankenhaus* was established by Dr Franz Isaak Dyck in Berdyansk, official opening 15 February 1913 announced in *Der Botschafter*

Bethania Mental Hospital* - opened as only Mennonite Mental Hospital in Europe in 1911, abandoned with Dniepr Dam flooding in 1927

Chortitza Hospital* - (actually in Rosenthal) apparently established about 1875, from 1903-1924 principal physician was Dr Theodor Hottmann; originally it was funded entirely by the Mennonite constituency, after the Revolution taken over by the government, in 1924 the government wished to abandon the facility

Chortitza Military Hospital - Maria Vogt worked at a military hospital in Chortitza, likely in the latter part of World War I (possibly was Alexandrabad?)

Esau* - eye clinic and hospital in Ekaterinoslav, established by 1894, private, established by Dr Jakob Jakob Esau, nothing remains (2010)

Karassan, Crimea - small hospital shown on the map near the *Zentralschule*, MHA p 29

Lepp & Wallmann Hospital (*Fabrikkrankenhaus*)* - built in Alexandrovsk/Zaporozhye for the care of employees, Dr Peter Zacharias from Osterwick, worked there until 1914, in 2004 functioned as the Urology Hospital for Zaporozhye, poor equipment, could not do trans-urethral resections, one of the most common urology operations, much the same in 2010

Lewin's Private Hospital - in central Simferopol, directed by Dr S Lewin, beds for all patients except those with communicable diseases, surgeon Dr Kablukov, consultant Dr Betling, comfortable, hygienic arrangements (1902)

Marientaubstummenschule (Maria School for the Deaf)* - established 1885 in Blumenort, two story expanded facilities built in 1890 in Tiege, Molotschna, nine year course, up to 40 students, students from German speaking areas all over Russia, school closed by the Soviet government, now building is an administrative centre (2010)

Melitopol* - Mennonite Field Hospital established by Mennonite congregation in Melitopol, to care for the wounded of World War I, Dr D Hildebrand the medical director; officially dedicated 12 October 1914

Morija Deaconess Home* - nursing and deaconess teaching, new facilities 1909, expanded facilities by 1912, functioned at least until 1927, two story building still exists, now used

as apartment block

Muntau Hospital* - established 1889 by Franz Wall, expanded in 1893 and 1907, active hospital with many inpatients, and many operations performed, especially by Dr Erich Tavonius, continued to function in the 1930s and 1940s, currently (2010) functions as children's sanatorium, and has outpatient clinics

Neu-Samara Hospital - founded by G G Voth in Pleshanovo in 1907, enlarged when the district took over the management in 1912, likely referred to by PM Friesen as *Krankenherberge* p 659

Ohrloff Hospital, Molotschna* - established 1910, 15 beds, expanded to 20 in 1915, functioned until at least 1920, old folks home during World War II, now the building no longer exists, not sure when it was destroyed, some accounts list it as having 50 beds, including some for infectious disease patients

Ohrloff Hospital, Barnaul (Slavgorod) - hospital built in Ohrloff in 1911; Dr George Fast practiced there for some time

Osterwick Hospital - on the south side of the main business street, seen on map of Mennonite Historical Atlas p 24

Petrovka Spa - a "natural treatment" spa at Petrovka, on the Kiev Simferopol Railway Line, owned and operated by Jakob Loepp, medical treatments under direction of Dr P J Chochlajewsky

Regehr, Gerhard, Estate - near Aulie Ata, on his estate Gerhard Regehr built a mission hospital, with a residence for a doctor, all at his own expense

Schoenwiese Railway Hospital - during the Russian Revolution nurse Maria Vogt worked in a number of hospitals, including the Railway Hospital in Schoenwiese

Simferopol Private Hospital - "surgical-theraputic" hospital in Simferopol, Dr E Muehlenthal - general surgeon, Dr Manrach - ophthalmologist, Dr Grassmueck - internal medicine and nervous diseases, Dr Weidenbaum - obstetrics and gynaecology, Dr Lau - ear nose and throat, Dr Pauker - skin and venereal diseases, Dr Kegler - surgery. Radiological investigations, rooms cost two, three and five rubles per day

Spindler's Hospital - private hospital in Alexandrovsk, general surgery and gynecology by Dr W Spindler, also surgeons specializing in neck, eyes, teeth and mouth, and general diseases, advertised in *Christlicher Familienkalendar* in 1905

Tiege Hospital, Sagradovka* - hospital established and functioned 1908-1913, between 1917 and 1925 a hospital was built, and functioned until at least 1933, obstetrical patients were handled in 1936, buildings still used as a hospital, and have even been expanded

Waldheim Hospital* - established 1908 by C H Warkentin, 30 beds, continued to function through World War II, now (2010) functions as a ten bed nursing home, there are some medical and dental clinics, it has an ambulance

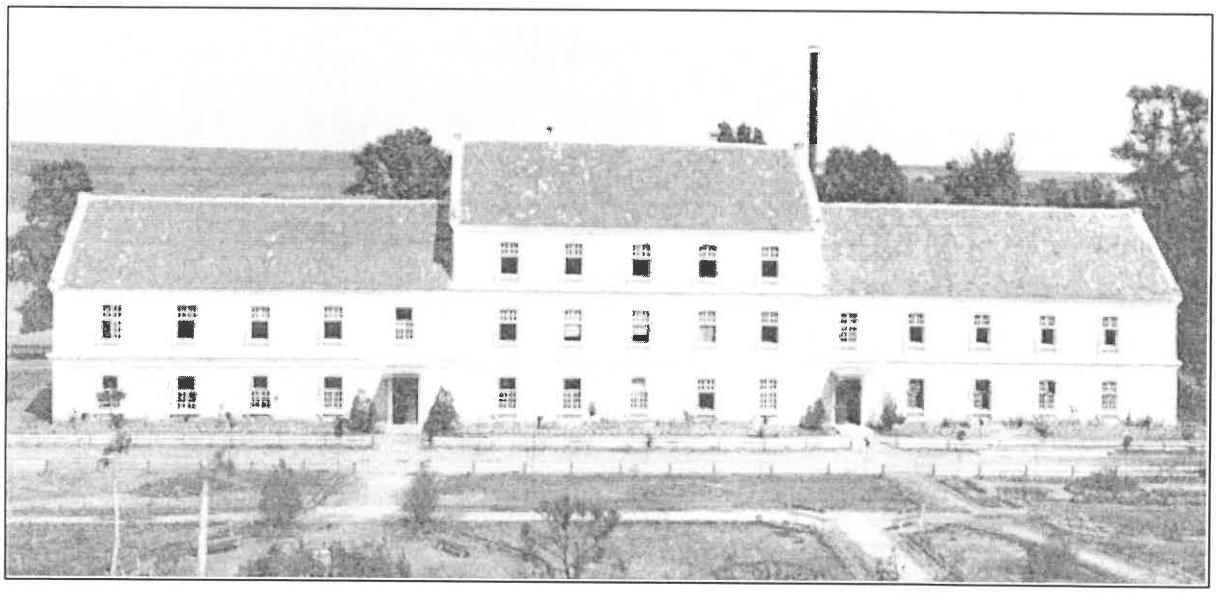
Wall Estate - when a second water-powered mill was built on the Jakob Wall estate in 1904, a hospital was also built

ALEXANDRABAD

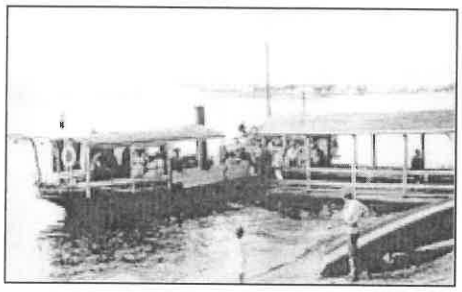
Alexandrabad, a private sanatorium, was first constructed by some Wieler brothers in 1904. It was built at a picturesque spot on the bank of the Dniepr River, across from the Chortitza Colony village of Einlage. Modeled after a sanatorium in Dresden, Germany, it advocated community life, healing and exercising in nature, eating dark bread and other nutritional foods, as well as wearing loose fitting clothing. It followed the treatment regimen advocated by naturopath Dr Heinrich Lahmann. It claimed to treat nervous disorders, heart, stomach and kidney diseases, gout, rheumatism of all kinds, diabetes and anemia, as well as women's conditions. It was open all year, both summer and winter. In 1910 Dr A von Poppen was the medical director.

Industrialist Jacob H Niebuhr purchased Alexandrabad in 1910, and in 1911 proceeded to expand and modernize it. Both health and recreational activities were available. There was a dock on the Dniepr River to provide access. The main building had individual guest rooms, a kitchen and dining room, an Xray and electrical room, as well as a bathing and massage area. The bathing could be with steam, carbonic acid or other special formulas. Various diets included vegetarian meals. Up to four doctors provided treatment for a wide variety of ailments. From 1910-1912 Dr Johann Johann Isaak, who later worked in Harbin, China, was likely one of the doctors. The surrounding park area was dotted with numerous small buildings, including cottages for those guests wishing to have more privacy. At times, in the evenings, an orchestra played in the park area.

Some time before the onset of World War I , Niebuhr passed on the ownership of the facility to his son-in-law, Wilhelm Boettcher, who was a German citizen. With the onset of the war all German owned properties were confiscated, so Alexandrabad was taken over by the city of Alexandrovsk, and was converted into a military hospital. After the construction of the Dneproges Hydroelectric Dam (1927-1932), Alexandrabad disappeared under the waters of the Dniepr River.



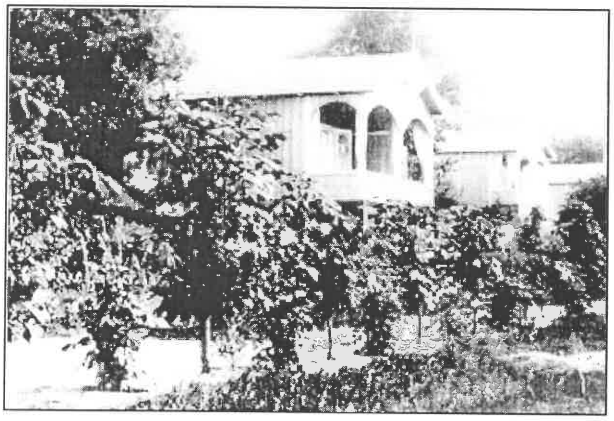
Alexandrabad main building about 1912



Alexandrabad Dock 1910

Sanatorium
Alexandrabad
am Dnjepr bei Alexandrowsk
Ausgerüstet nach Dr. Lahmanns System mit den neuesten Naturheilmitteln:
Licht-, Luft- u. Sonnenbäder, Wasserheilverfahren, Dampfbäder, kohlensaure Bäder u. dergl.
Elektrische Heilmittel: Faradisation, Galvanisation, Franklinische Kopfdusche, Vierzellenbad, Vibration und Röntgenapparat, Massage, allgemeine und spezielle bei Frauenkrankheiten.
Behandelt werden: Nervenkranke, Erholungsbedürftige, müde, abgespannte Chroniker, Gelähmte, Herz-, Magen- und Nierenkranke; ferner: Frauenkrankheiten, Stoffwechselerkrankungen: Gicht, Rheumatismus aller Art, Zuckerkrankheit, Blutarmut, Bleichsucht u. dergl.
Spezieller Magenkrankentisch!
Vegetarischer Tisch!
Die Anstalt ist Sommer und Winter geöffnet.
Prospekt auf Wunsch gratis und franko!
Adresse für Briefe und Depeschen: Alexandrowsk, Gouv. Jekaterinoslaw, Sanatorium Alexandrabad.

Advertising in 1913



Cottages at Alexandrabad

Electrical and X-ray room 1910

Dining Room 1910

Steam room 1910

Sources:
Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia*, *Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, Alexandrovsk, pp 67-68
Krahn, Cornelius, in *Mennonite Encyclopedia* Vol 4, p 1058 "Alexandrabad"

BERDYANSK DEUTSCHES KRANKENHAUS

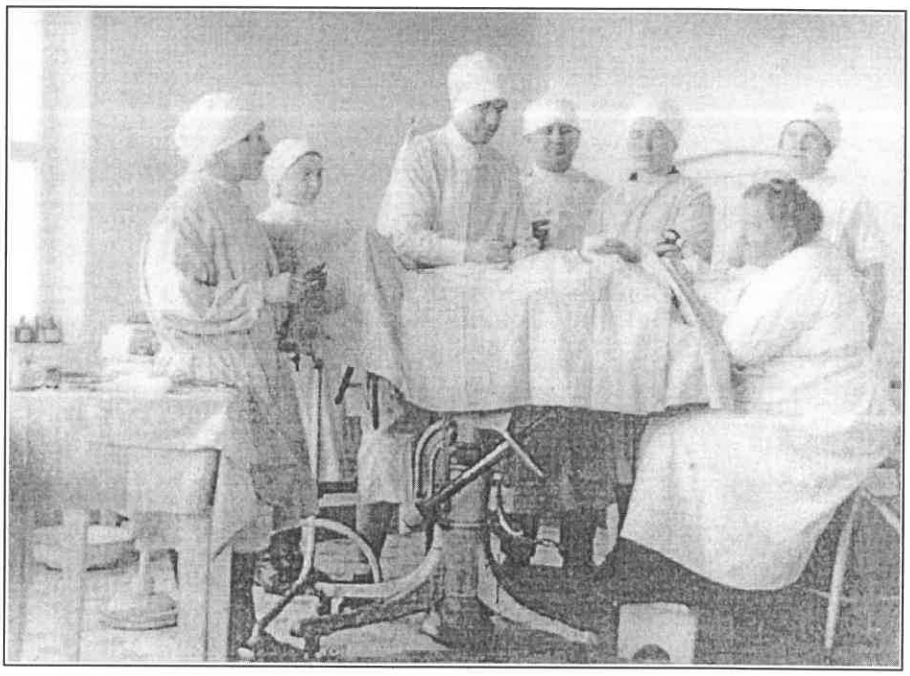
A hospital was opened by Dr Franz Dyck in Berdyansk, the official opening being on 15 February 1913. There was an advertisement regarding the hospital in *Der Botschafter* on 17 January 1914.

Dr Franz Dyck was the son of Isaak Dyck of the Rosenhof Brodsky Estate. He married Anna Neufeld in 1905, and had three children, Leopold, Victor and Arnold. Dr Dyck died 6 April 1920 in Berdyansk, age 45, cause unknown.

The fate of the hospital after the death of Dr Dyck is not known.

Dr Franz Dyck, Berdyansk

Advertising in *Der Botschafter*
17 January 1914



Berdyansk Deutsches Krankenhaus operating room

Berdyansk Deutsches Krankenhaus

BETHANIA MENTAL HOSPITAL
(*MENNONITEN IRREN:HEIL und PFLEGANSTALT BETHANIA*)

Bethania Mental Hospital was a mental care institution established by the Mennonites of Russia in 1910; it was the first and only mental health institution established by Mennonites in Russia, and even all of Europe. Historian P M Friesen saw it as an example of mercy, and righteousness in the light of the gospel.[1]

An early mention of Mennonite care for the handicapped in Russia was made by the Mennonite Teachers' Society (*Mennonitischen Lehrerstandes*) in 1904. It was said that "the representatives of the Mennonite conferences are firmly of the conviction that the poor epileptics, mentally deficient and physically sick in our churches, to whom for a long time no attention has been paid, finally have to have something done for them. But this can only be successful with a special institution, where side-by side with a medical specialist there must also be a believing minister."[2] From that time on this was discussed at various conferences, minister and teacher David Epp of Ekaterinoslav showing special interest.[3] Originally it was hoped that all German speaking colonists would participate, then it was narrowed down to Mennonites and Lutherans.[4] It soon became evident that Mennonites were the only ones actually prepared to go ahead with the project; so it was that the General Conference (*Allgemeine Bundeskonferenz*) of all Mennonite churches in Russia was assigned full responsibility.[5] It was decided that the institution would be financed only by voluntary donations; the ministers and elders promised to strongly encourage members to give, and to have special offerings twice a year.[6] The name "Bethania" was chosen to signify that it was to be "a quiet place of peace in which the Lord Jesus would gladly dwell and where many would find physical and spiritual help."[7]

A Bethania Commission was established which took responsibility for further development, including general operative principles and building appropriate facilities. Separate commissions, such as the Building Commission, were assigned various aspects of the project. Many of the members of the commissions were either industrialists or estate owners, together with a sprinkling of ministers. While funds for the project came from many individuals and churches, the bulk actually came from the wealthy members of the commissions. On 1 December 1910 the Bethania Commission consisted of: Jakob Jakob Sudermann (Apanlee), Chair, Peter Abraham Koop (Einlage) Vice-Chair, Johann Gerhard Lepp (Schoenwiese) treasurer, Abraham Peter Lepp (Schoenwiese) secretary, and Elder Johann Peter Klassen (Neu-Schoenwiese), Heinrich Jakob Braun (Neu-Halbstadt), Abram Abram Bergmann (Bergmannstal), and Heinrich Jakob Heinrichs (Kuprijanovka).[8]

Development of Bethania was patterned after Bodelschwingh's Bethel Institute in Bielefeld, Germany. This facility offered health care and other advantages to the poor, was concerned with inherited defects, the handicapped, and the "weak ones in body and spirit." Some of the personnel which later served at Bethania received training there. Dr Isaak Thiessen, later the medical director of Bethania, studied there for several years.[9]

Bethania was established on land of the former village of Alt-Kronsweide, along the Dniepr River.[10] Building plans were soon implemented with the "Bethel" unit for women opening on 15 March 1911, and the "Salem" unit for 16 men opening on 20 August 1911.[11] Of the 53 patients cared for between 15 August 1911 and 1 December 1912 there were 11 acute and 20 chronic mental

cases, eight epileptics, 12 idiots (by definition having an IQ of under 25, or behavior pattern of a two-year-old), two with organic nervous disorders. Of these patients, two were discharged as healed, three were improved, six unchanged, and three died. Eleven patients had no prior schooling, 34 had *Dorfschule*, seven had *Zentralschule* and one had university education.[12] About one third of the patients were admitted and cared for without charge, while the others paid 20 rubles per month. Those who did not have sufficient means to pay had to have a letter substantiating this fact from their church or village; the church or village would then be charged for the upkeep of the patient. People of all faiths were admitted, but Mennonites were given preference.

The actual function of Bethania was at first under the purview of the Bethania Commission, but then also involved the medical and other personnel. One of the criteria for medical appointments was that the doctors would work in conjunction with and adhere to the principles of the Mennonite faith. Dr Wilhelm Stieda of Riga was the first appointee as chief of medical staff and presumably met these criteria. His reports regarding the medical status to the end of 1913 certainly would bear this out. Dr Isaak Thiessen was first approached as a possible staff member. He asked for and received help for several years of studies at Bodelschwingh's Bethel Institute in Bielefeld, then returned to Bethania as assistant to Dr Stieda in 1913. The exact terms of reference are not known, but it seems that Dr Thiessen was appointed the chief-of-staff from 1914 on, until Bethania ceased to function in 1927. Peter Schellenberg was the first, and very beloved *Hausvater*. Unfortunately he was murdered during a robbery on 6 February 1912.[13] His home was then used to house some of the overflow patients. Schellenberg was replaced by Jakob K Janzen, who together with his wife, had a very positive influence. Janzen continued in his position until 1920 and was followed by Johann P Wiebe. A large number of nurses and other volunteers were involved in the care offered at Bethania. In 1913 Frida Haggist of Brombach and Justine Funk were head nurses. Some nurses were trained in Bielefeld, but a number were also interns from the medical school in Halbstadt.

One of the actual treatments given to the patients consisted of hot and cold baths. Various medications were also given, sleeping pills and nerve pills, although this was obviously not an important feature; one year the total budget for medicines was only 1,000 rubles. There were very strict orders never to strike a patient, and patients were never to be locked into individual cells. Some judgement was probably used in special situations; when a patient tried to strangle Mrs Janzen he was put into a straight-jacket, then given hot and cold baths. Supervision of patients, day and night, was part of the protocol. Occupational therapy in the form of working in the hospital bakery, or garden, or on the 200 dessiatine farm, was part of treatment. Schooling in the form of the four basics was also provided, reading, writing, arithmetic and Bible stories. At no point is there specific mention of the use of psychotherapy by any of the physicians.

It soon became apparent that the facilities of Bethania needed to be expanded. At one point the waiting list for admissions totalled 53 patients, of whom some had been on the list for two years. In March of 1912, 22 more beds were added to each division, providing a total of 76 rooms. Most of the additional beds were actually in the central administrative building.

From 1 December 1912 to 1 December 1913 a total of 88 patients were treated, 52 men and 36 women. Age spread was: under 10 years - 2; 10-20 - 19; 20-30 - 17; 30-40 - 26; 40-50 - 8; 50-60 - 10; 60-70 - 3; over 70 - 3. Single patients, 61; married, 21; widowed 6.

Finances were often an important factor in the reporting about Bethania. Total income (including building fund) by 1 July 1912 was 219,630 rubles. The budget for the year 1912-1913

was 37,956.67 rubles. One estate owner, W W Schroeder, contributed 40,000 rubles in honor of his wife and daughter. He stipulated that two nice rooms were to be kept available for indigent patients. Gifts to Bethania were often in kind.

The onset of World War I in 1914 stopped the rapid development of Bethania, and certainly broke its connections with Bodelschwingh's Bethel in Germany. The Russian Revolution did not spare Bethania; gangs of robbers quite freely sacked the place, and endangered both patients and staff. With difficulty the institution continued to function into the 1920s. A report of 1925 summarized much of the activity of Bethania in its first 15 years.[14] There had been 991 patients, of whom 203 had died. The typhus epidemic of 1921 had been especially difficult, both on patients and staff. There had been five different doctors including Isaak Thiessen, Peter Sawatzky for a time in 1918, Anna Martins from the Crimea and Dr E Tavonius of Muntau. There had been78 male nurses, 86 female nurses and 353 other staff. A total of 204 patients were treated in 1925, of which 101 were Russian, 87 German (mostly Mennonite) and 16 Jewish.

After the Revolution Bethania was taken over by the province Ekaterinoslav, then in 1925 by the federal government. Even so, 4,868 rubles were received from Mennonite congregations in 1925. With the building of the Dneprostroy Power Dam, Einlage (Kitchkas) and Bethania had to be evacuated. Dr E Tavonius and Dr Isaak Thiessen suggested that the Mennonite constituency should appeal to the government to transfer the Bethania patients to Halbstadt, where there was a medical school.[15] But this did not happen.[16] On 9 May 1927 all the patients, including 33 Mennonites, were transferred to a mental hospital in Igren. None of the Mennonite personnel went with them.

Hausvater Jakob Wiebe penned the last report [17] to be heard from Bethania on 11 May 1927. "What we did not think was possible, which was against all our perceptions, against which we struggled with all our resources, has happened. Bethania no longer exists. We, our people, our patients, no longer have Bethania. It has really happened."

And so closed an important chapter in Russian Mennonite life.

Notes:

The story of Bethania Mental Hospital of South Russia is well outlined in a number of articles. No attempt has been made to specifically pinpoint each fact which is covered in these sources. The sources referred to are:

1. The Story of Bethania published by the Mennonite Benevolent Society and Bethania Mennonite Personal Care Home Inc, Winnipeg, MB, October 1996. This book includes a description and history of Bethania of South Russia, 1911-1927
2. The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol I, pp 301-302, article written by Cornelius Krahn. The original idea and purpose of the institution is well presented. This article has been updated and included in the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia online.
3. There are also numerous pictures and descriptions of Bethania in the two most commonly used books of illustrations from Russia
   Gerhard Lohrenz - *Heritage Remembered*, pp 81, 82, 83, 83
   Walter Quiring and Helen Bartel - *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, pp 49, 50

Other Specific Sources:

1. Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennoniten Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurien, 1911, pp 546, 660, 661
2. *Mennonitsches Jahrbuch* 1909 Bethania Report, p 89
3. Ibid, 89
4. Ibid, 89
5. Ibid, 89-90
6. Ibid, 90
7. Ibid, 90-91
8. Ibid, 91
9. Ibid, 91
10. Bergen, Heinrich, Chortitza Colony Atlas, Saskatoon, Canada, 2004, map 27a, 29
11. *Mennonitisches Jahrbuch* There were annual reports about Bethania certainly 1909, 1911, 1912 and 1913. Medical reports were written by Dr Wilhelm Strieda in 1912 and 1913 The present note is from the report of 1911-1912, pp 93, 94
12. Ibid, 100
13. *Odessaer Zeitung*, News Item 8 February/March 2, 1912
14. *Unser Blatt*, February 1926, p 95, report written by Johann P Wiebe, the manager (*hausvater*) at the time
15. Tavonius, Erich and Thiessen, Isaak, letter to *Unser Blat*, published in *Mennonitische Rundschau* 8 June 1927, pp 5, 8
16. Tavonius, Erich and Thiessen, Isaak, report from Molotschansk in *Unser Blatt*, March 1927. pp 178-179, includes news about Bethania
17. Wiebe, Jakob "*The Last News from Bethania*" report written 11 May 1927, published in *Unser Blatt* July 1927, p 304

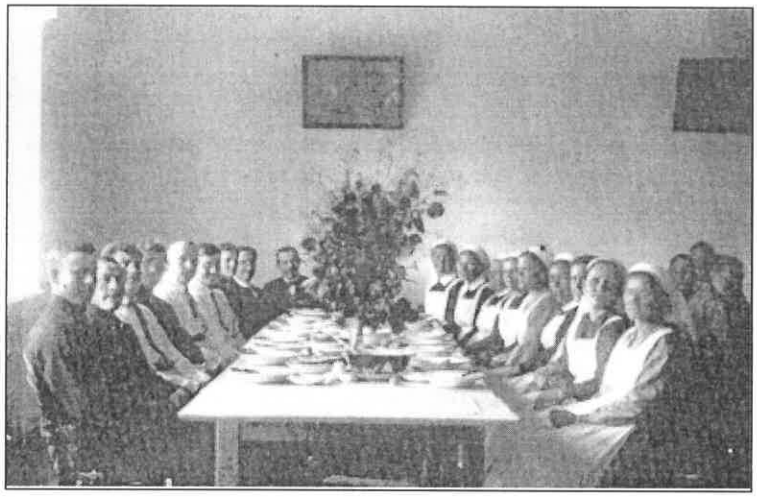
There were numerous additional reports about Bethania in the Mennonite press and the *Odessaer Zeitung* of the time. The principal items of concern seemed to be the membership of the overseeing board, the date of commission meetings, the budget and building projects. There is little mention of the actual psychiatric or medical treatment given patients.

Main buildings at Bethania

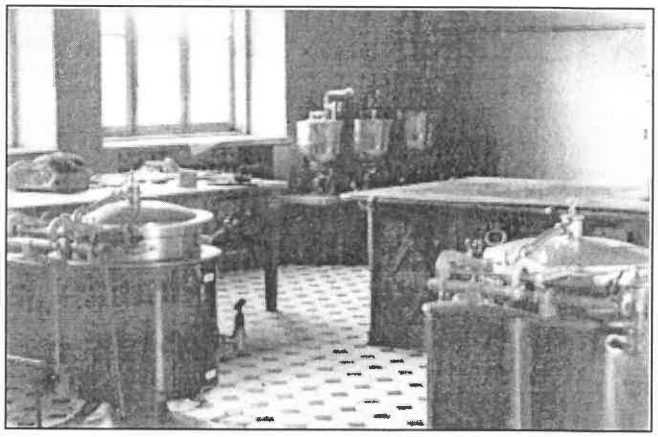
Bethel, pavilion for women

Salem, pavilion for men

Nurses at Bethania



Bethania dining room



Bethania kitchen

Bethania personnel about 1914: Second row, second person Druggist Kroeker, third House Father Wiebe, fourth Head Nurse Sara Koop, then Dr Isaak Thiessen

Bethania personnel in 1925: Dr A Martins and Dr Isaak Thiessen, centre row, third and fourth

CHORTITZA HOSPITAL
(ROSENTHAL)

Chortitza (Rosenthal) Hospital was likely established before 1875. Early on it was entirely supported by donations from Mennonites. Even though it was called the Chortitza Hospital, it was actually situated in the neighbouring village of Rosenthal.

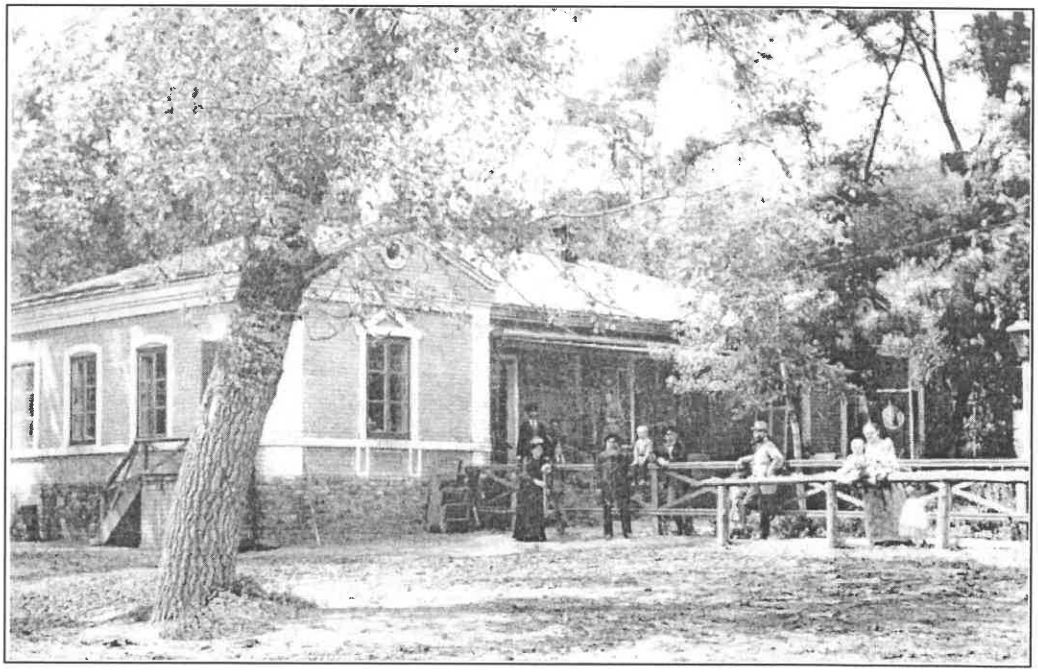
Dr Theodor Hottmann was Chief-of-Staff from 1903 on. He volunteered to serve in the medical corps during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 and was actually captured by the Japanese and imprisoned in Port Arthur. At the conclusion of the war he was released and returned to Rosenthal. By 1924 he had three assistants.

The hospital was taken over by the government after the Revolution, certainly from 1920 on. The Mennonite community was still willing to help with the costs, patients or their relatives bringing their own food. In the early 1920s the hope was to obtain some help for the hospital through the MCC for food and other articles such as bandages and linens.

In 1924, the government, as a cost saving measure, was intending to close three quarters of the hospitals in the Ekaterinoslav region, presumably including the Chortitza Hospital.

Sources:

Mennonite Historical Atlas, p 22
Quiring, Walter, and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, 1963, p 34
Yoder, H C, news report in *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 16 January 1924, p 1



Chortitza (Old Colony) Hospital in Rosenthal

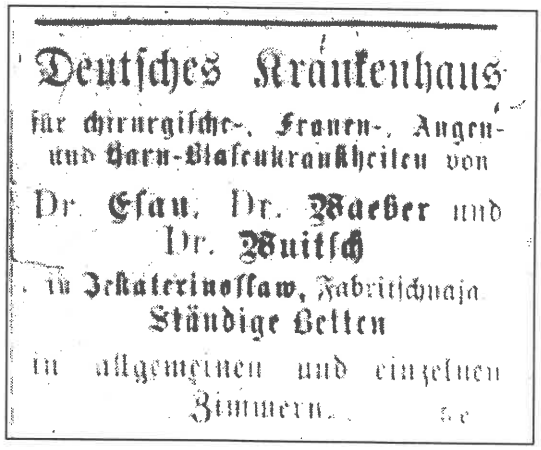
JAKOB ESAU HOSPITAL
(*Deutsches Krankenhaus*)

Jakob Esau was a physician, originally obtaining his medical degree in Kiev, probably around 1880. He practiced in the Chortitza villages for some years, then likely took extra training in ophthalmology.

Since Jakob attended the *Gymnasium* in Ekaterinoslav, it was logical that he would set up his ophthalmology practice in the same city. He established a clinic and a small hospital in 1894.

The hospital seems to have grown. In time, certainly between 1905-1914, Jakob was joined at the hospital by a general Surgeon Dr Waeber, who specialized in intestinal and bladder surgery. In 1910 the advertising mentions another surgeon, Dr Wuitsch. In 1914 a dentist, Dr S L Sotnik worked some hours of the week at the Esau hospital, including Sunday mornings.

The hospital, known as "*Deutsches Krankenhaus*" boasted an Xray department, used to take diagnostic films, being able to visualize "sick bones, joints, lungs, heart, stomach, intestines, kidneys, and bladder." They could also treat, by radiation, conditions of the hair, skin, bones, internal organs, as well as uterine bleeding and other female disorders. This follows the usual pattern of initially assuming that anything and everything could be treated by radiation. Later, particularly after some of the complications of radiation, for example leukemia, were discovered, the use became more rational. The machine was probably was installed on or soon after 1910.


Deutſches Krankenhaus
für chirurgiſche-, Frauen-, Augen- und Harn-Blaſenkrankheiten von
Dr. Eſau, Dr. Waeber und Dr. Wuitſch
in Jekaterinoſſaw, Fabritſchnaja
Ständige Betten
in allgemeinen und einzelnen Zimmern.

Ad for *Deutsches Krankenhaus* in *Der Botschafter* 15 January 1910

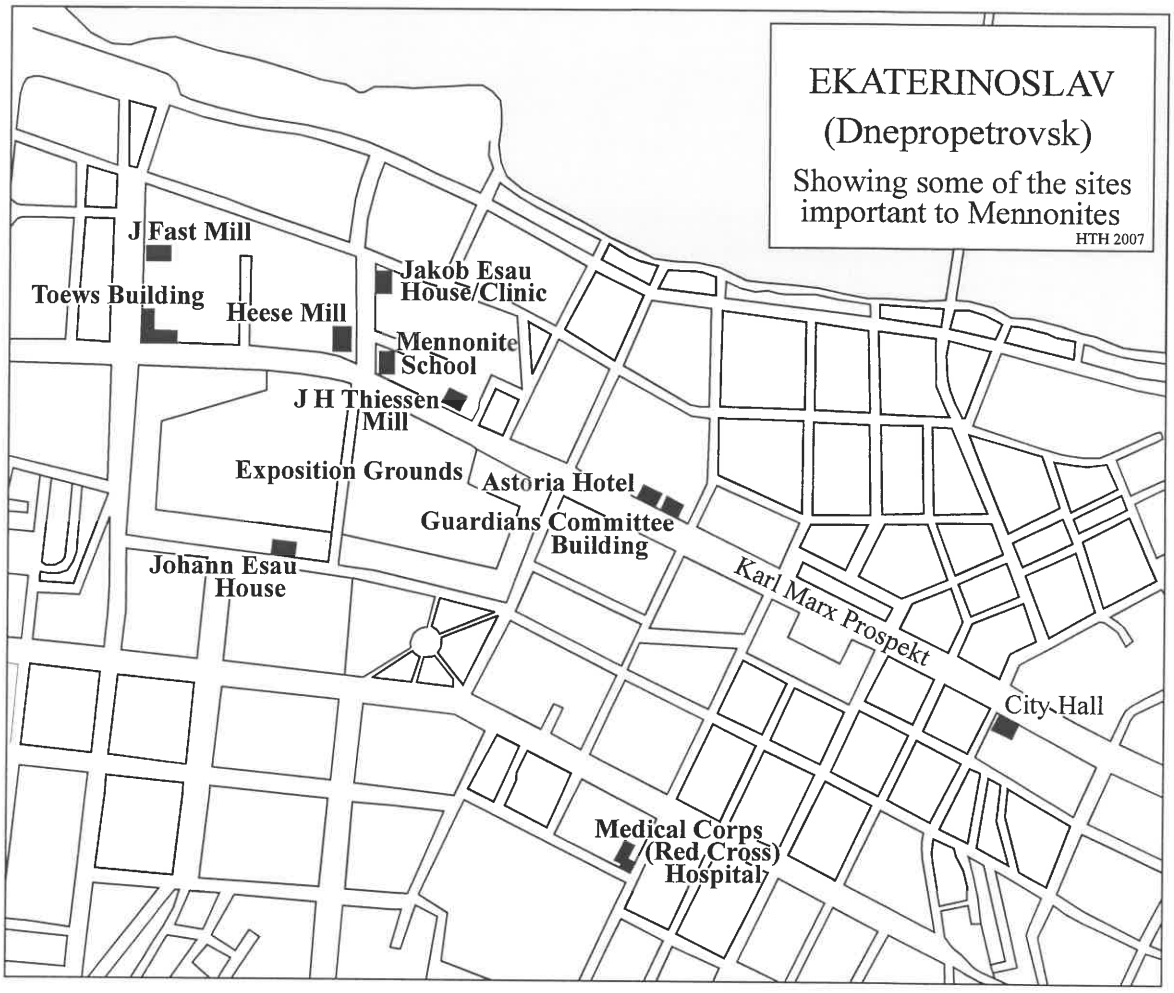
In the hospital there was, of course, an operating room, certainly for eye surgery, and elaborate enough for intestinal surgery. Care in the hospital was around the clock, on both public wards and in single hospital rooms.

The clinic and the hospital functioned until at least 1919. Since Jakob Esau died in 1927 it is doubtful if the hospital was in operation after that time.

Sources:

Der Botschafter, advertising (all on page 1), 1 January 1910, 5 January 1910, 12 January 1910, 15 January 1910, 1 January 1914, 4 January 1914, 10 January 1914, 14 January 1914, 17 January 1914

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 95, 101-102,141



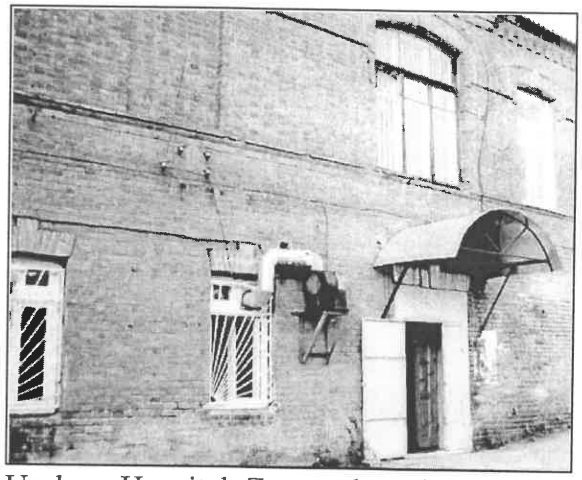
See the Jakob Esau House/Clinic upper left

LEPP & WALLMANN HOSPITAL
(*FABRIKKRANKENHAUS*)

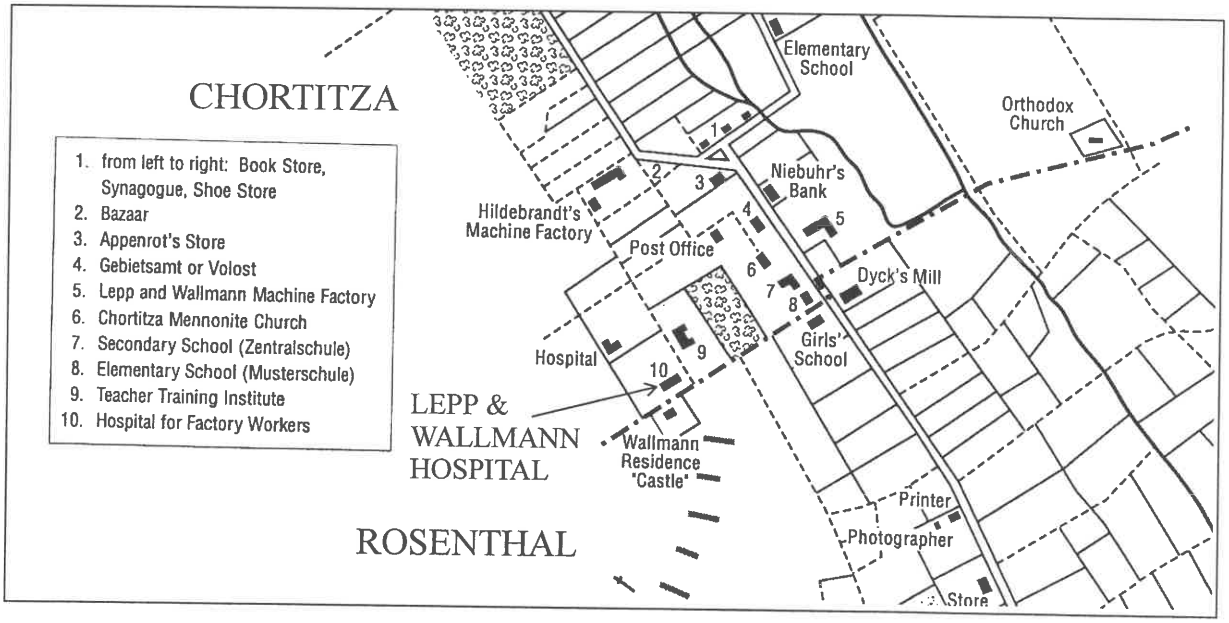
The Lepp & Wallmann Hospital was built in Alexandrovsk/Zaporozhye for the care of company employees. Dr Peter Zacharias of Osterwick worked here until 1914

There are wards, and there is an operating room. Currently (2004 and 2010), the hospital functions as the Urology Hospital for the city of Zaporozhye. The doctors to be competent, but the equipment is poor. because of the lack of the appropriate instruments they cannot do the most rudimentary urological operarion, trans-urethral resection, which is the commonest operation for the enlarged prostate.l

Operating Room window in the previous Lepp & Wallmann Hospital, now Urology Hospital for the whole city of Zaporozhye



Urology Hospital, Zaporozhye, former Lepp & Wallmann Hospital for their employees



MARIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB
(*MARIENTAUBSTUMMENSCHULE*)

The Maria School for the Deaf and Dumb was first organized in 1881 to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the reign of Czar Alexander II, and was named after his wife, Czarina Maria. The Czar granted the original patent for the school on 22 December 1881. The idea for such an institution seems to have originated with a protestant Armenian, A G Ambartsumov, trained in Switzerland.

The school was established by the Halbstadt Volost, later joined by the Gnadenfeld Volost, and supported by many churches and individuals. The initial humble beginning was in 1885 in a house in Blumenort rented from Gerhard Klassen. There was one pupil, with one instructor/administrator. The second year there were more students, and an assistant teacher, supplemented the third year by a teacher with special skills. By 1890 the school had expanded to the extent that a large, beautiful two-story building was constructed in Tiege, Molotschna, at a cost

The main building of the Maria School for the Deaf

of 40,000 rubles. It contained classrooms, bedrooms, a dining room for 40 students and several teachers' residences. An artesian well supplied the water system, which ran to the kitchen, bathroom, laundry and barn. Items such as windows were paid for by individual benefactors. Originally there were two "sick rooms" which were converted into bedrooms for personnel.

With the program in full operation there were about 40 students, and at least four full time

teachers. The nine year course was equivalent to the usual village school education, taught in German. Handicraft training such as woodworking and basket weaving for boys and sewing for girls was also provided, with an annual sale of crafts helping to finance the school. The school was considered to be one of the best institutions for the deaf in Russia. Its family atmosphere, the low student/teacher ratio, with well trained teachers who were properly paid, contributed to this. The teachers had been trained in places like St Petersburg and Frankfurt, Germany, and regularly attended conferences in Russia and Germany. Students were accepted from all German speaking areas of Russia, but only those who were of normal health and development. In 1910 there were 38 students, 23 boys, 15 girls; the school had received eight applications for the following year.

Benefits to the students were obvious. They could read, write, calculate, knew Bible stories and geography. Many could speak quite well. A considerable number were able to find independent employment.

Some of the teachers were: Ambarsum G Amburzumov (1885-1891), Jakob Jakob Doerksen (1886-1895), Christian Esenwein (1887-1907), Heinrich Heinrich Janzen (1893-1910), Wilhelm Sudermann (1895-1910), Anna Doerksen (1903-1908), Abraham Unruh (1905-1910) (list compiled in 1910).

During World War I, two of the teachers were actually unable to leave Germany, but the decreased number of teachers was matched by lower student enrolment, down to about 20. During this time some of the parents found it impossible to visit their children at the school for as long as three to four years.

During the Russian Revolution and Civil War the school was able to function, but had to be very careful with its resources. Food was scarce, but there was enough to prevent starvation, cloth material and thread were hard to obtain, as were simple household medicines.

The school was finally closed by the Soviet government, but first somebody must have cared enough about the building to put a statue of Lenin in front of it. During the German occupation, from1941-1943, the building was standing, but it was filled with nothing but rubble. In 2010 the former school building is an administrative centre.

The Maria School for the Deaf and Dumb, according to historian P M Friesen, represented the "first charitable institution involving all the Mennonites of Russia, and for them was a valuable adornment, worth all the love and excitement it could generate."

Sources:

Enns, Gerhard, Letter, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 24 November 1920, pp 11, 12

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt Taurien, 1911, pp 655-657

Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 373, 374

Goerz, H, *Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung*, Echo Verlag, Steinbach, Manitoba, Book 7, 1950/51 pp 147-149

Mennonite Encyclopedia Vol 3, p 483

Mennonitisches Jahrbuch, 1903, pp 87-94; 1905/06, pp 79-81; 1906/07, pp41-43; 1907, pp 21-23; 1908, pp 77-80; 1909, 69-73; 1910, pp 46-55; 1911/12, pp 106-108; 1913, pp 162-172

MELITOPOL FIELD HOSPITAL

World War I began in late July 1914. Austria invaded Serbia on 28 July1914. Russia then declared war on Austria. Germany supported her ally Austria and declared war on Russia.

On 16 September 1914 the members of the Melitopol Mennonite congregation met to discuss the founding of a Mennonite field hospital as tangible evidence of wanting to help in the war effort, in a humanitarian way.

The idea was immediately accepted in principle.

Practical aspects of the project were swiftly dealt with. Adelbert Penner allowed the use of his newly remodeled two-story house free of charge. Private donations provided 15 beds and essential furniture. The ladies of the church supplied the necessary linens. Voluntarily imposed dues by the members of the congregation raised the 600 rubles per month needed to maintain the facility. Dr D Hildebrand agreed to head the hospital without any reimbursement whatever.

All members of the congregation left the meeting feeling that they had contributed something towards healing the wounds of the sick and infirm.

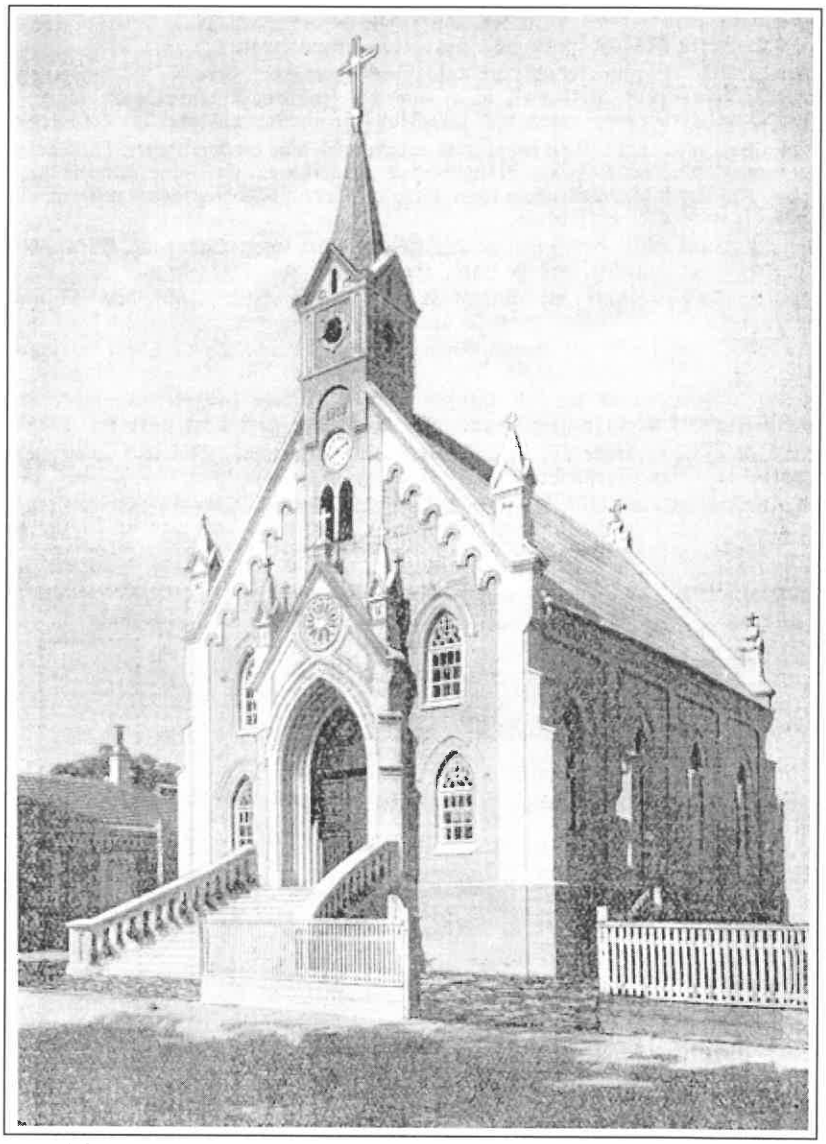
The hospital was officially dedicated on 12 October 1914. A number of officials, including the mayor and the head of the local medical corps, attended. "Father Jakob," religion teacher of the Mennonite *Fortbildungsschule*, actually dedicated the facility. Jakob Janzen, minister of the local congregation, speaking in Russian, mentioned the obligations to the Fatherland in "flowing words" and praised the generous hospitality which Russia in the past had offered the Mennonites.

Medical student J Sudermann assisted Dr Hildebrand in the management of the hospital. Honorary nurse was Miss A Klassen, head nurse Miss M Teske and assistant head nurse Miss Huebert. With the arrival of six *Sanitaeter* the hospital complement was complete, and patients could be accepted.

Sources:

Gilbert, Martin, *The Dent Atlas of Russian History*, J M Dent, London, 1993, p 79

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 1*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, pp 234, 235, 238, 244, 247



The Mennonite Church in Melitopol, where the meeting was held 16 September 1914 to organize the Mennonite Field Hospital

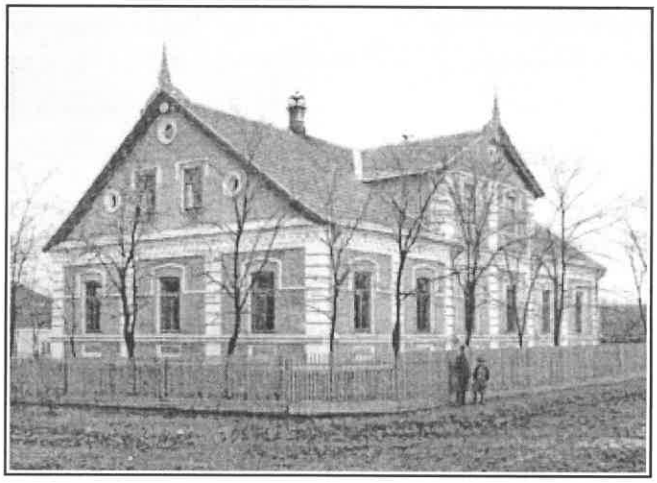
MORIJA DEACONESS HOME

A hospital was established in Muntau, Molotschna Colony, in 1889. Minister and land owner Franz Wall of the Crimea was inspired by the example of Georg Mueller of Bristol, England, to act in faith. The Muntau project grew, and when the founder died in 1904, his wife and family, particularly his son Franz, continued as administrators of the hospital. Shortly before World War I the facility was expanded to a capacity of 60 beds. For many years the Chief-of-Staff was Dr. Erich Tavonius.

The Muntau Hospital also had an associated school of nursing with a residence, established in 1896, but it remained small. In 1907 there were four qualified nurses and four trainees involved.

The need was felt to establish a much larger and more comprehensive deaconess home in the Molotschna. The models used were a number of deaconess homes that were in the Baltic States, in Mitau (Jelgava), Riga and Reval (Tallin). A number of Mennonite women had actually graduated from these institutions. There was to be religious and general knowledge instruction as well as theoretical and practical nursing. Once the course was completed, *Morija* could remain the home for nurses working in various surrounding health care institutions such as the Muntau and Ohrloff hospitals. It was planned that it would also serve as a retirement home for sick or aging nurses. Three men had the vision to establish the *Morija* Deaconess Home – Franz Wall Jr., Peter Schmidt, a land owner, and Dr. Erich Tavonius.

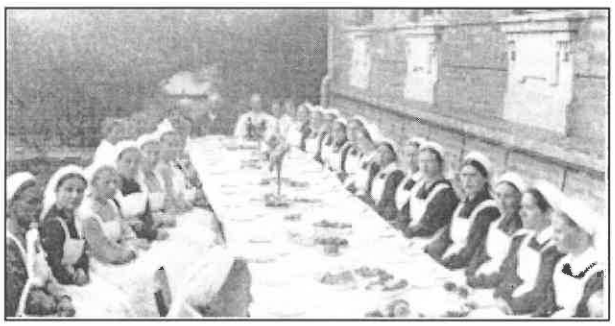
A three year curriculum was developed to implement the plans. The first year involved theoretical instruction in subjects including Bible, German, mathematics, geography, history, anatomy and other sciences. The last two years were dedicated to practical work in the Muntau Hospital. Instructors would be the Home Administrator, medical staff such as Dr. Tavonius, and various other teachers from the schools in Halbstadt. Nursing was to be the vocational vehicle, but service to God by helping the sick and disabled was the primary focus. The overall vision statement was modelled somewhat after that of a similar home in Berne, Switzerland.



Morija Deaconess Home, completed in December, 1909

Construction of the building, meant to house 20-25 nurses, was begun in May, 1909. Apparently initial plans had been to complete the project by September, but inclement weather caused some delays. In June they were working on the foundation, and finally in December the facilities were ready to be occupied. The amenities of the building included central heating, bathing rooms and running water. On the evening of December 3 all the

nurses, Dr. Tavonius and a number of other guests were invited for tea to celebrate the event. This was followed by a prayer meeting in which the whole project was offered to the Lord and Master. The official dedication, however, was delayed until the spring of 1910, because it was felt that the roads were undependable in wintertime, making it difficult for the out of town visitors.



Schwesternfest (Nurse Celebration) at *Morija*

Throughout 1909 and into 1910, Heinrich Braun, the treasurer for the *Morija* project, published requests for funds for the building project in *Friedensstimme.* Lists of donors and donations were also published, for example gifts totalling 3,655 rubles, 76 kopeks were listed on June 13, 1909. P. Schmidt, likely one of the founders, gave 2,000 rubles, and Dr. Tavonius contributed 912 rubles, 76 kopeks. In early 1910 a number of invitations to the official opening appeared in *Friedensstimme.* The secretary of the committee responsible for making the announcements was Jakob Kroeker. Sunday, May 23, the dedication ceremonies for the *Morija* Deaconess Home were held in the Mennonite church in Halbstadt. The first class had nine students, which, as mentioned, had moved into the new structure in December of 1909. Physicians involved with instruction were Dr. Erich Tavonius and Dr. Abram Hausknecht. Administrator [*Hausvater*] was Minister Jakob Friesen. The head nurse was Vera Michelson from Estland, in the Baltics, likely from the deaconess home in Reval. Nursing instructors were Katya Klassen, Maria Braun, and by 1915 Maria Wall. Committee members were president, initially Elder H. Unruh, then later David Klassen, secretary Jakob Kroeker and treasurer Heinrich Braun. Other members were Jakob J. Sudermann, Franz F. Wall and David J. Dick of Apanlee.

Morija staff 1915-1916. Sitting front row l to r Maria Wall, Minister Jakob Friesen, nurse Vera Michelson and Dr Abram Hausknecht

The first structure, dedicated in 1910, was a one story building. Soon this structure was obviously too small for the ever expanding program, so it was decided to build a new facility. The old building was sold to Johann Schroeder in 1912, who then used it as a residence. The new two-story training school was completed by December 1912. With a new program introduced in 1913, total enrolment for the year was about 35 nurses. Obviously the concept of this, the only deaconess home among the Mennonites, had taken hold and was flourishing.

The new expanded *Morija* Deaconess Home

The *Morija* Deaconess Home continued to function through the revolutionary period, but with some difficulties. In 1920 Jakob Friesen, the administrator, reported that during World War I nurses from *Morija* had worked in institutions as far away as the Waldheim Hospital (five nurses), Odessa and Simferopol. In 1920 they more commonly nursed in the near-by Muntau and Ohrloff Hospitals. The time of anarchy presented many difficulties, but through God's grace these were overcome. A relatively minor difficulty was the shortage of material for underwear and nurses' uniforms.

When the communist government was entrenched, the religious aspects of the instruction were dropped. As late as 22 January 1927, Dr. Tavonius wrote a letter to *Unser Blatt*, which was also published in the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, asking young ladies to consider nursing as a career by training at the "professional medical school." There was no specific mention of the previous "deaconess" function. After the death of Vera Michelson in 1929 the home was turned into a medical institute under the supervision of a communist administrator.

The two-story building is currently used for apartments.

Sources:

Friedensstimme - news items and announcements: 6 June 1909, p 9; 13 June 1909, p 10; 5 September 1909, pp 2, 3; 30 January 1910, p 3; 15 May 1910, p 3; 5 June 1910, pp 3, 4; 3 July 1910, p 9; 18 July 1910, pp 3, 4

Friesen, Jakob P, Letter, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 24 November 1920, p 12

Friesen, P. M., Die *Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurien, 1911, pp 650, 659

Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Wunnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 298, 299

Goerz, H., *Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlug,* Echo-Verlag, Steinbach, Canada, 1950/51, p 150

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 78, 81, 83, 84

Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol 3, p 752

Quiring, Walter, and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*,Saskatoon, Canada, 1963, pp 70, 73, 79

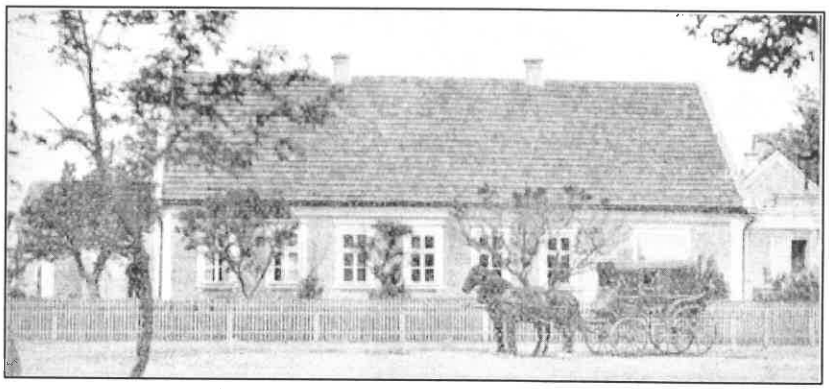
Tavonius, Erich, and Thiessen, Isaak, Letter, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 8 June 1927, pp 5, 8, a reprint of a letter first published in *Unser Blatt*

Webster's New World Dictionary defines "deaconess" as follows: "A woman appointed as an assistant in a church, as for helping with the care of the sick and poor of the parish." This definition precisely fits the terms used in the establishment of the *Morija* Deaconess Home.

MUNTAU HOSPITAL
(Franz Wall's House for the Sick)

Franz K Wall first lived in Orloff, Molotschna, then moved to the Crimea, where he was a minister and farmer. He felt drawn to help the sick and the suffering, being strongly influenced by the work and experience of Georg Mueller of Bristol, England, who ran an orphanage.

Franz wanted to establish something in the region he came from. A plot of land was available in Muntau, right next to the house of the regional doctor, Dr W L Pedkov. He purchased the lot for 650 rubles in 1889. With his own finances he built the initial hospital. It was 60 feet long, had three patient rooms, 2 beds each, an operating room, and a room for bathing, at a cost of 5,570 rubles. His wife and family were wholeheartedly involved in the project. One daughter, Elisabeth (Liese) Wall became the head nurse in the hospital. They moved into the new building on 15 September 1889.


Muntau Hospital before 1911

People experienced good treatment at the hospital, so it gained public confidence. At first the facilities were adequate, but soon it became evident that they were too small. In 1892 a forty-two foot wing was added; it had eight beds in three patient rooms, accommodation for a nurse, and a laundry. It was occupied in May of 1893. The facility was officially registered with the Ministry of the Interior in1897 in the name of the founder. Registration demanded some additions and modifications, which were completed by November 1899. Another four beds were added, now totaling 18, in emergencies up to 24. Also added were waiting and reception rooms, two isolation beds for infectious cases, a basement, a room for a nurse, enlarged laundry and kitchen and a corridor. Cost of the construction was 7,307 rubles. Originally all finances came from Franz Wall, but in time some also came from patients, as well as donations from individuals and churches

Muntau Hospital operating room

The position of Regional Doctor and Chief-of-Staff of the hospital was available in1900, Dr Pedkov having completed his term. Dr Erich Tavonius, 1895 graduate of the University of Dorpat, was appointed upon the recommendations of his friends, Jakob Sudermann and David Dick. With a full time doctor the work progressed rapidly. In 1902 the were 191 in-patients, occupying 3,239 patient days. A total of 95 operations were done, of which 80 were major and 15 minor surgery. Of these operations 72 were done with

chloroform general anaesthesia, 12 with local, 11 without anaesthesia. There was resection of tumor in 20 operations, resection or scraping of bone in 12, seven hernia repairs, five major amputations and even four cataract removals. All operations were done by Dr Tavonius. Eight patients died in the hospital, one with pneumonia after an operation. Income for the year was 5,277 rubles, expenses 4,944 rubles, leaving a positive balance of 333 rubles. Of the income, 2,696 rubles were donations. The poor patients were accepted with little or no payment.

Muntau Hospital dining room

Founder Franz Wall died in 1904, but his widow Elisabeth Wall and their children were determined to continue the service. There continued to be much work; in September eight nurses staffed the hospital, of whom four had joined in the past year. Also in 1904 the Tavonius family had a tragedy, and Dr Tavonius left to reconsider his future. Even without a resident doctor the hospital admitted 195 patients, occupying 2,812 hospital days. Dr Kludt of Prischib offered to come in for emergencies.

Dr Tavonius returned to the hospital at Easter in 1906. He had in the meantime taken specialized training in Ear, Nose and Throat surgery. In 1907 an additional section was built for infectious disease patients, at a cost of 2,500 rubles. There were seven nurses in the hospital; Dr Tavonius was starting to look for an assistant. In 1908 there were 457 patients occupying 6,226 hospital days, which increased to 554 patients occupying 7,210 days in 1909. Beginning in 1908 a regional doctor, Dr Seiler, helped in the hospital, particularly by seeing ophthalmology patients in his clinics. He was also a graduate of the University of Dorpat. *Morija*, deaconess nurse training centre started operation. Dr Tavonius was one of the main instructors at this institution. It was hoped that it could train nurses for the hospital. The 1909 annual report for the first time is under the name of Franz Wall Jr, son of the founder.

Muntau Hospital in 1912

The annual report called the year 1911 "unforgettable," both from the point of view of progress and promise for the future. A total of 539 patients occupied 6,678 hospital days. Considered cured were 282 patients, improved 186, unchanged 29 and 10 were worse. There were three doctors, Elisabeth Wall was head nurse and Agathe Doerksen the seamstress.

But the enlarging of the facilities was the really unforgettable part for 1911. As well as enlarging much of the main floor, a second story was added, consisting of patient rooms and an operating room. There was hot and cold running water as well as electricity. The new facility could

accommodate 40 patients and cost 45,000 rubles. It was occupied in the spring of 1912. Dr Buettner was hired as an assistant; he was also in charge of the laboratory and Xray. In one of his trips to Germany Dr Tavonius and his daughter Ingeborg had purchased Xray equipment. Through 1912 and 1913 the patient load rapidly increased. During this time the *Morija* Deaconess Home came into full function, and the hospital benefitted greatly from this source of excellent nurses.

Elisabeth Wall, head nurse 1900 to 1930

Dr Tavonius was drafted into military service during World War I, being mobilized in the spring of 1915. The hospital continued to function, but obviously with reduced capacity during the absence of the principal surgeon. He was discharged in the summer of 1918, and courageously began his work again. The surgery he had practiced during his military stint was helpful in his work at the hospital. The vicissitudes of the Russian Revolution and the subsequent Civil War, the typhus epidemic and the period of famine brought many patients to the hospital, but made it difficult for it to function.

Franz Wall Jr and wife Anna

Administrator Franz Wall reported on the function of the hospital in 1920. There had ben decreased activities during the war, but for the last two years (1918-1920) the load of patients increased drastically. There was considerable shortage of medicines and linens, but helped greatly by materials sent by the American Red Cross. Dr Tavonius continued to be active, as well as his assistant Dr Katharina Hildebrand. There were 14 nurses, and 12 other staff members.

In a letter published in the *Mennonitische Rundschau* in July of 1923, Dr Tavonius thanked for food packages and medical supplies that had arrived. Many patients were arriving at the hospital, some on foot, others riding on cows or horses. No one could afford the cost of traveling by train. There were operations every day; the nurses were working hard. It was expected that the salaries of hospital personnel would be paid from the proceeds of a crop from the 20 dessiatines that the hospital owned. Dr Tavonius hoped that the supplies of chloroform, ether and iodine would not run out!

The Muntau Hospital was nationalized, probably about 1924. Dr Tavonius stayed on as Chief-of-Staff at the hospital, continued his office work and was director of the *Morija* Deaconess Home, all for 160 rubles per month. The nurses were not allowed to wear their uniforms nor sing religious songs. Franz Wall, for the time being, continued as administrator and bookkeeper, with the help of nurse Helene Goljan.

Dr Rosine Lutscher worked at the hospital in 1924, and her husband, Dr Peter Wilhelm Dirks 1924-1925. Dr Karin Tavonius also worked in the hospital with her father, some time in the 1920s.

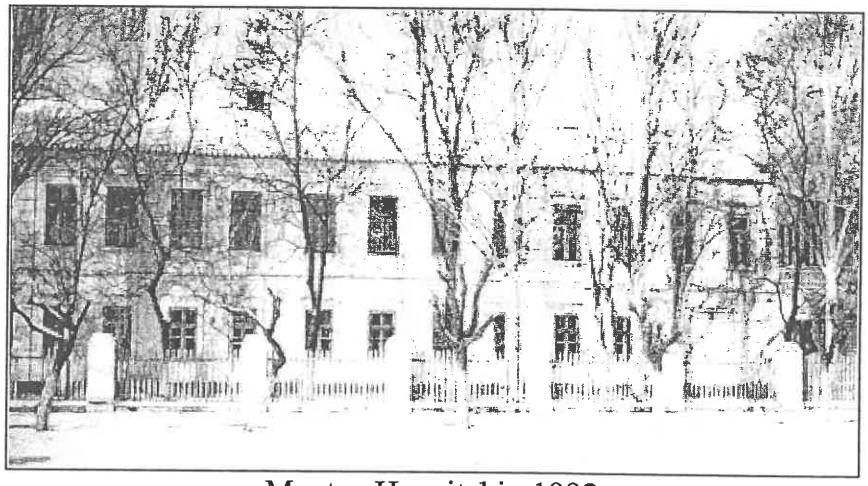
Dr Erich Tavonius died 29 April 1927, apparently of pneumonia and a heart attack. His funeral on 3 May was attended by many. He was buried in the Muntau cemetery.

At the hospital Dr Tavonius was succeeded by Dr Oberlander, who unfortunately soon died himself; he was a severe diabetic. Daughter Erika Tavonius, for her studies, received one quarter

of her father's salary, which came to 40 rubles per month. It was impossible for Erika to continue her studies while the family owned property, so the Tavonius children gave their house to the Muntau Hospital for staff people to live in. Dr Peter Dyck, who had started working with Dr Tavonius in 1926, continued on at the hospital until 1928.

Starting in 1929 life was made increasingly difficult for administrator Franz Wall. He was so honest, so meticulous with his finances, that it was difficult for the authorities to find fault with him. Finally in 1930 he was released from his position. He lost all of his property, and was declared a non-citizen. The family stayed in the area until 1932, then moved to Neu-Einlage. He was finally arrested and jailed on 6 April 1936.

The hospital continued to function as an acute care facility at least into the 1940s. During the German occupation of 1941-1943 a patient with acute appendicitis was brought from Waldheim to the Muntau Hospital. An appendectomy was done by a Dr Klassen.



Muntau Hospital in 1992

The hospital itself has continued to function, for some time likely as a children's sanatorium; now it is also a senior citizen home. The Mierau family of Winnipeg in 2000 provided funding for the purchase new laboratory equipment, which is in use to this date. The donation was made to honor Dr Peter Mierau, a pathologist who died in 1999, and particularly to the Muntau Hospital, because that is where Dr Tavonius operated on the father of Hilda Mierau, the wife of Peter.

Sources:

Annual Report of Muntau Hospital for 1902, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, May 6, 1903, p 9

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)* Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurien, 1911, pp 657-658. Includes annual report for 1909

Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, 333-334

Mennonitisches Jahrbuch, 1903, pp 94-100; 1904, pp 28-30; 1905/06, pp 81-82; 1906/07, pp 47-48; 1907, pp 23-26; 1908, pp 82-83; 1909, pp 79-80; 1911/12 pp 116-119; 1913 pp 179-180

Mierau Family Information

Report of History of the Muntau Hospital, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 1 January 1903, pp 8, 9, 10

Report of Muntau Hospital by Franz Wall, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 24 November 1920, pp 12-13
Report of Muntau Hospital, *Mennonitische Rundschau*. 26 March 1924, p 13
Tavonius, Dr Erich, Letter published in the *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 19 September 1923, p 10
The Tavonius Family, interviews of Erika Tavonius as well as family documents and photographs, Astrid Koop, Vineland Ontario, 1996, many pages

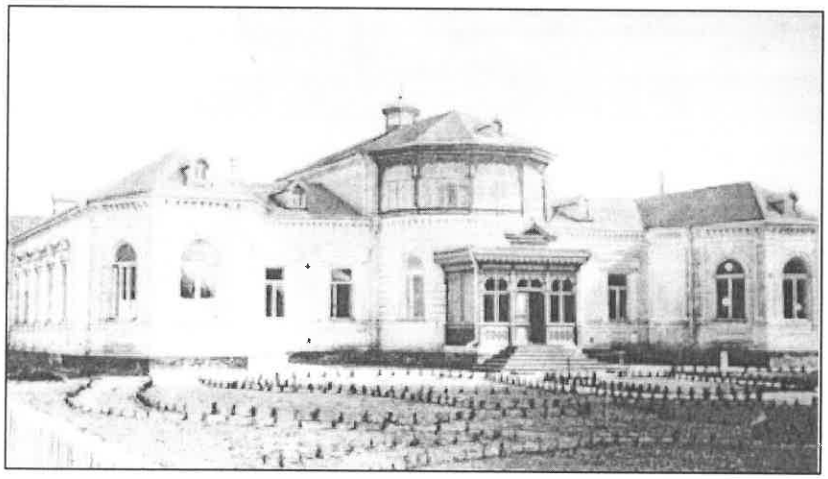
OHRLOFF HOSPITAL, MOLOTSCHNA

Apparently the idea of establishing a hospital in Ohrloff, Molotschna, came from the doctors, Johann Johann Friesen and Gerhard David Duerksen. The actual fulfilling of the dream and much of the original financing, however, was carried out by the heirs of the H H Reimer family, who at the time owned the nearby Juschanlee Estate. Specifically involved were Heinrich Guenther with Maria Reimer and Helena Reimer. The basic underlying motive was purely good will, to alleviate the bodily suffering of those in need.

The basic plan of the building was considered to be "a stately structure, large and practically appointed." Construction was begun in 1907, was completed in 1909, with dedication and beginning to function on 6 January 1910. Advertisements were placed in the *Friedensstimme*, inviting patients to visit the new facility. After completion of construction the hospital was taken over and sustained by the surrounding community, although the wealthy families in the region often helped with specific projects.

Ohrloffer Krankenhaus
eröffnet!
Advertising in *Friedensstimme*
9 January 1910

The original capacity was 15 beds, enlarged in 1915 to 20 although "actually up to 50 beds were occupied." The infectious diseases wing was soon taken up by the large number of surgical patients, so additional infectious disease beds had to be constructed. In 1911 Xray equipment was imported from Berlin; several estate owners provided the financing for this project. During World War I 15 beds were made available for the treatment of wounded soldiers.


The new Ohrloff Hospital, about 1910

Chief-of-Staff until 1916 was Dr Gerhard Duerksen from Margenau; he was also an Internal Medicine specialist. Surgeon until August of 1914 was Dr Otto Pinker, a German citizen. From August 1914 as surgeon, and after 1916 Chief-of-Staff was Dr Peter Dueck. After 1918 Dr Julius Heinrichs, from the Chortitza Colony, was specialist in Internal Medicine. Administrator from the beginning was Heinrich Dietrich Guenther. Nursing staff usually came from the *Morija* Deaconess Home.

Patients who could pay were charged 1.50 to 3 rubles per day. Four beds, used for those who could not pay, were subsidized by a number of wealthy families.

In 1911, Dr Pinker did 160 operations, 98 with chloroform general anaesthesia, 24 with ether, 35 with morphine or local anaesthetic, 2 with spinal, and 1 with no anaesthetic. A total of 334 patients were admitted, using 3,316 patient days, with an average stay of 9.9 days. Head nurse Alexandra Lieblik wished to go as missionary, and was replaced by Anna Harder of Lichtfelde. Dr Duerksen left for Germany, both for educational purposes and rehabilitation; Dr Pinker took over his position. He was assisted at surgery by Dr Johann Isaak

Ohrloff Hospital about 1914

The report for 1912 mentions that three doctors did a total of 325 operations: 31 head and neck, 15 breast, 113 abdominal (35 appendectomies), 49 gynecological and bladder, 20 tumors (15 benign, 5 malignant), 22 bone operations (3 amputations), 12 fractures and 63 "other." Russians admitted were 276, German 139 (117 Mennonites), Bulgarians 42, Jews 10. A total of 467 patients occupied 6,140 patient days, averaging 13.5 days per stay.

Doctors and nurses at the Ohrloff Hospital abt 1918
Second row Dr Heinrchs, then Dr Peter Dueck

Up to 1918 the hospital could more or less maintain itself. After that, however, tremendous inflation and the many sick and wounded people from both sides of the Russian Civil War, most of whom could not pay, made continued function difficult. Special needs were bed linens and clothes, as well as medications and bandages. A report about the hospital activities was written by Dr Peter Dueck, Chief-of-Staff, in July 1920. It is not known exactly how soon after this report the hospital ceased to function, presumably some time in the late 1920s.

The building was still present during World War II, but functioned as an old folks home. Anna Koop (nee Janzen) actually worked in the facility as a health care aide. If patients from the district needed medical care, they went to the hospital in Muntau

The building, as of 2010, no longer exists. It is not certain when it was destroyed. The site is now an open field.

Sources:

Dueck, Dr Peter, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 24 November 1920, p 12. A letter briefly outlining the history of the Ohrloff Hospital

Friedensstimme, advertisement announcing opening, on 9 January 1910, p 13

Friesen, P M, Die *Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurien, pp 658-659

Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 343, 344

Hildebrandt, Abe, Winnipeg, personal information

Koop, Anna, Winnipeg, personal information

Lohrenz, Gerhard, Heritage Remembered, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, p 75

Mennonitisches Jahrbuch 1908, p 84; 1909, pp 81-84; 1911-1912, pp 121-124; 1912, pp 71-73; 1913, pp 172-179

Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963, p 82

TIEGE HOSPITAL

(in Tiege, village No. 8 in Sagradovka Colony)

The Sagradovka Mennonite Colony began in 1872, the area eventually being divided into 17 villages. Many of the villages were named after the original homes of the pioneers, most being from the Molotschna. Six villages were established in 1872, another three in 1873. Tiege was one of the 1873 villages, and was designated No 8. Later villages were established in 1874 until 1883. Tiege was the administrative centre of the entire colony. The colony Sagradovka in time had a population of five thousand people.

The evidence of what happened varies, but the following seems to be the most likely course of events regarding medical facilities. A pharmacy with a house for the pharmacist, as well as a house and office for a doctor, together with reception area and waiting room, were built in Tiege in 1877. The buildings were well constructed with stone walls and tin roofs. The Ohrloff Municipality (*Volost*) was responsible for the project.

August Gauderen, of Baltic origin, came as a pharmacist in 1877, and continued to serve in Tiege until he died in 1943.

Doctors were appointed by the *Volost*. The first doctor in Sagradovka was Dr Boris Wecksler, from 1877 to 1896. There was no active long term facility in Sagradovka, but Franz Peters began and sustained a hospital from 1908 to 1913. His wife was the heart and soul of the project, so when she died, the enterprise collapsed.

Dr Hermann Meder

Dr Hermann Meder first worked in Odessa, then transferred to Sagradovka in September 1901. He had an urgent invitation to work in Chortitza, Chortitza, so he left Sagradovka in November 1905. He returned to in April 1913, and continued to work in Sagradovka until he died in late 1917 It is not known whether he worked in the facility of Franz Peters, but it seems that it may have been a rather rudimentary affair, since the impression is that Dr Meder did not work in a regular hospital. One of Dr Meder's principal concerns was that Sagradovka needed a hospital, so there definitely was no active hospital in 1917.

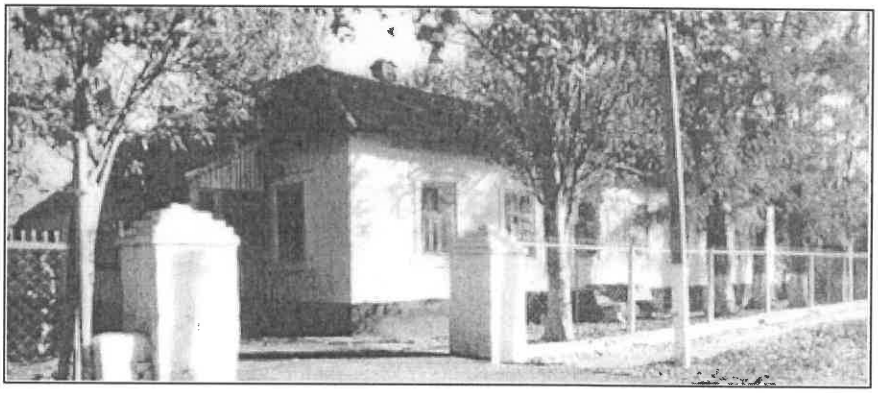
Dr Wilhelm Peter Dirks and his wife Dr Rosa Lutscher transferred from the Muntau Hospital in 1925, to the hospital in Tiege, Sagradovka. Either there had been an unused building before that time, or a hospital was constructed between 1917 and 1925. The couple worked together in the hospital for seven years, until 1932. It was noted that Wilhelm was skillful in his medical management and very dedicated. Helping in the laboratory function of the hospital was Dr Peter Dirks, brother of Wilhelm. He had just finished his training at the University of Kiev. Dr Wilhelm Dirks was arrested in 1933, and finally banned to the Omsk region of Siberia.. Dr Peter Dirks was arrested and also exiled soon after his brother.

The hospital, however, continued to function. It definitely handled obstetrical cases in 1936. Twins Tina Froese (nee Peters) and Annie Schmidt (nee Peters) were delivered in the hospital on 12 November 1936, and Helmut Buller was born there only four days later, on 16 November. All three are now in Canada, members of the Portage Avenue Church in Winnipeg.

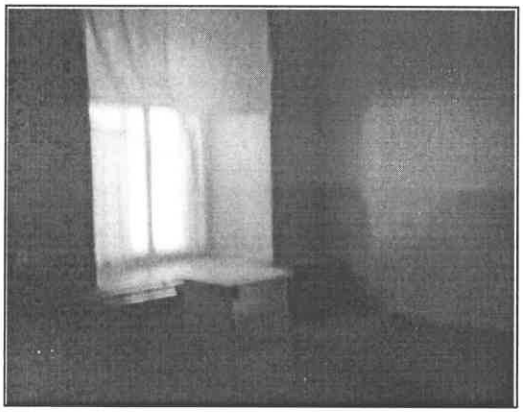
The buildings are still being used as a hospital, as a matter of fact the facility has been expanded, the original building being parallel to the street, the additional wing is perpendicular.

Sources:

Buller, Helmut, personal information
Enns, J J, notes about Dr Wilhelm Dirks and Dr Rosa Lutscher
Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, p 519
Huebert, Helmut T and Schroeder, Wilhelm, *Mennonite Historical Atlas*. Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 131-132
Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Sagradowka*, Echo-Verlag, Rosthern, Saskatchewan, Canada, 1947, pp 56-60
Molotschna Flugblatt, News Report 9 December 1917, p5; 15 December 1917 p 6



The hospital in Tiege, Sagradovka in 1994



The hospital room in which
Helmut Buller was born

WALDHEIM HOSPITAL

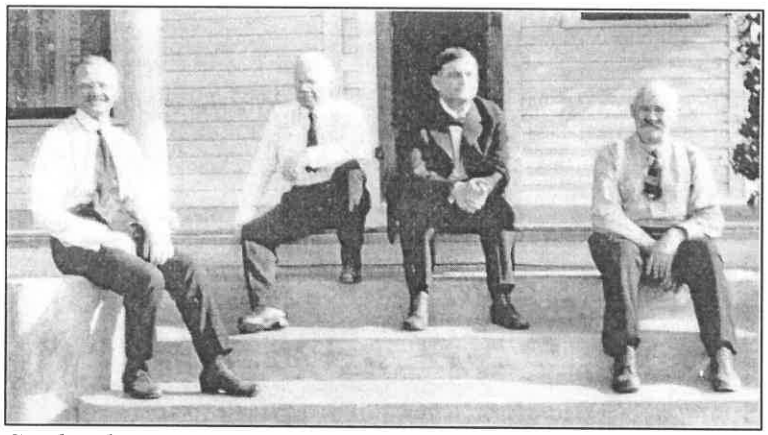
Cornelius Heinrich Warkentin and his wife Aganetha (nee Janz) founded the Waldheim Hospital in north-east Molotschna. Cornelius was the *Schulz* (mayor) of Waldheim, and the owner of a general grocery store with a pharmacy, Aganetha was a midwife who had trained in Vienna, Austria. Waldheim was a big village with several factories, and there were many Mennonite and Russian villages in the area, so it was felt that there was a need for a hospital in the region. As well, it was a considerable distance to the hospital in Muntau.

Official dedication of the completed hospital was on 13 January 1908, with many people in attendance. The hospital was built on land owned by the Warkentins; initial cost of the hospital was covered entirely by the Warkentin family. The facility consisted of several buildings; it was considered to be quite modern for the times, and included a pharmacy. The hospital comfortably accommodated 30 patients. It was called "the younger sister of the Muntau Hospital."

The first year of operation there was one doctor; the first doctor unfortunately lasted only a brief time, however Dr Seiler came on staff on 8 December 1908. Other staff consisted of three nurses and the Warkentins. Aganetha Warkentin, with her training as midwife, was the actual manager of the facility. In 1908 the hospital had 122 patients, who occupied 1,617 hospital days, with an average stay of 13 days. Of the patients 121 were discharged, and one died.

Almost from the start the hospital had various difficulties, including financial problems. Historian P M Friesen mentions "difficult circumstances and great disappointments." The owners tried to sell, presumably because the hospital was not doing well. An ad in "*Der Botschafter*" in January of 1913 confirms that they had not been able to sell, but that sick patients would be accepted all hours of the day or night, and that a second doctor was expected in the near future. During World War I beds were allocated for the care of wounded soldiers. It was reported that five nurses from the *Morija* Deaconess Home worked in the Waldheim hospital

During the subsequent Russian Civil War Warkentin, after some harsh words and "loud" conversation, apparently came to an agreement with Nestor Makhno that the hospital would accept wounded soldiers from all sides, be they Reds, Whites or from anarchists such as Makhno, if they would leave the hospital in peace. This seemed to spare the hospital, although Waldheim as a whole had more than its share of atrocities which were carried on in the region.



Studienkommission in 1920. l to r A A Friesen, J J Esau, B H Unruh and Cornelius H Warkentin

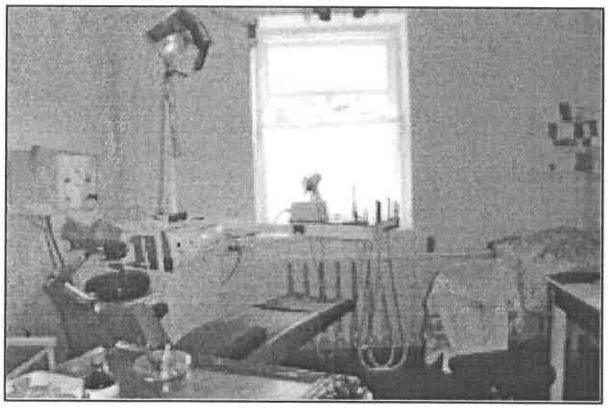
Cornelius Warkentin was elected as one of the representatives of Molotschna Mennonites on the *Studienkommisson*, and therefore had to travel to Europe and North America to study the possibility of Russian Mennonite immigration. They left southern Russia on 1 January 1920, and Cornelius,

with all the travel, inspections and deliberations, never did return to his home. Wife Aganetha and her children remained. The Communist government took control of the hospital in 1922. Aganetha felt that she could no longer contribute, so she and her children left Russia in 1923.

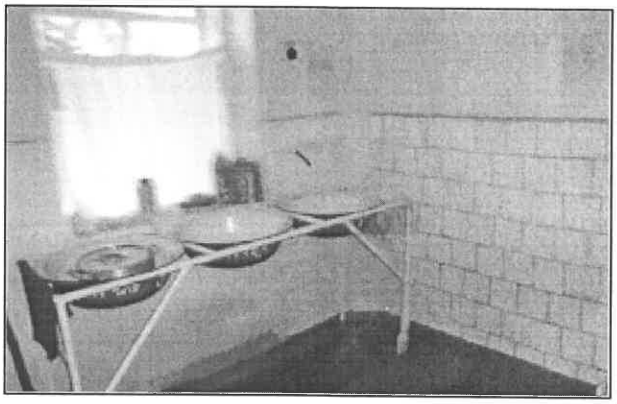
It was at first thought that the Waldheim Hospital was closed for many years, but there is evidence that it was certainly functioning in the late 1930s and early 1940s. According to a Waldheim resident, Victor Koehn, the hospital was very busy during this time, with a Dr Boris Karlovich even doing operations. Victor's uncle, Hans Koehn, had an appendectomy; it is not sure that he had much of an anaesthetic, since he screamed very loud during the operation. With the German occupation of the region 1941-1943 there was a doctor in the hospital and a number of German nurses. When Victor himself had appendicitis, however, a German officer drove him to the Muntau Hospital, where a Dr Klassen operated on him.

Waldheim Hospital in 1997

The hospital still exists to this day. In 2004 a plaque honouring Cornelius and Aganetha Warkentin was placed in the hospital by relatives from Canada. At the time the facility was functioning as a ten-bed nursing home; there were some medical and dental clinics, the dentist being Dr Troyan. There was also a pharmacy. Warkentin relatives contributed funds to help the hospital, to rebuild the roof and install indoor toilets. It was still functioning in much the same capacity in 2010. An ambulance was standing by, just in case of an emergency.



Waldheim Hospital 2010



Waldheim Hospital 2010

Sources:

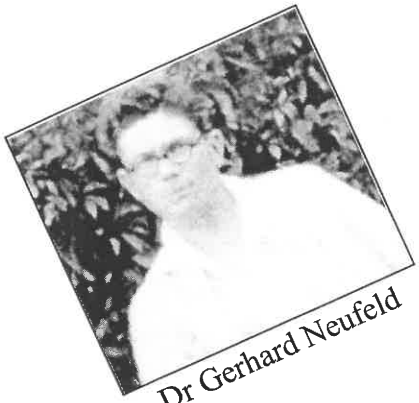
Der Botschafter, 8 (21) January 1913, p 1
Epp, Frank H, *Mennonite Exodus*, Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, Altona, Canada, 1962, pp 44-46
Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1911)*, p 658
Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, pp 379-380
Goerz, H, *Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung*, Echo-Verlag, Steinbach, Manitoba, p 150
Huebert, Helmut, personal inspection
Koehn, Victor, personal information
Mennonitisches Jahrbuch, 1907, pp 26-27; 1908, p 84. There were no reports about the hospital from 1909-1913
Thiessen, Arnie and Rosemarie, personal information

Note: According to reliable sources the original capacity of the hospital was 30 patients (not 50 as is commonly mentioned), and continued to be 30 patients. No additions were built

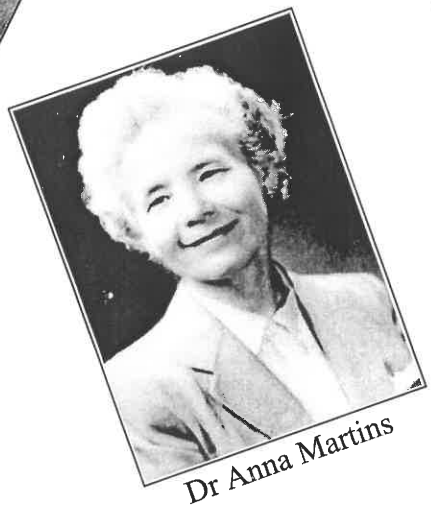
III

MEDICAL DOCTORS

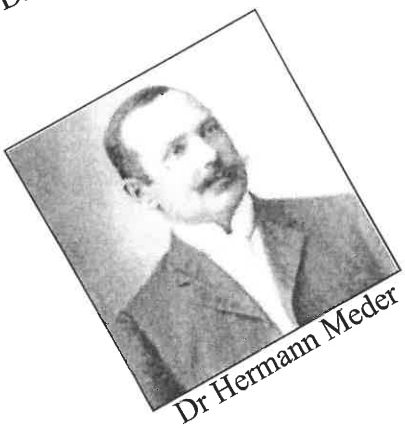
Dr Franz Dyck



Dr Gerhard Neufeld



Dr Anna Martins



Dr Hermann Meder

MEDICAL SCHOOLS IN RUSSIA ATTENDED BY MENNONITES

It should be noted that initially there were only a few medical faculties available in Russia from which students could graduate with a legitimate medical degree. The Imperial Medical and Surgical Academy of St Petersburg was founded in 1798. Dorpat University in Tartu, Estonia, had a medical department in 1802, where instruction was in German. The Medical Faculty of the University of Kharkov was founded in 1805. The University of Odessa was founded in 1865, but the medical faculty did not begin until 1900. The University of Simferopol first had a medical faculty in 1918.

DONETSK

Martens, Tusnelda - from Nikolayevka, Ignatyevo

DORPAT (at Tartu, Estonia)

Buettner, H
Pinker, Otto - from Ohrloff
Rempel, Dietrich Dietrich - likely from Gnadenfeld
Seil -
Tavonius, Erich A -

KHARKOV

Dick, Johann - from Crimea
Dirks, Wilhelm - from Waldheim, Molotschna
Dyck, Franz - from Fuerstenau, Molotschna
Dyck, Franz Isaak - from Berdyansk
Dyck, Johann Jakob - from Telentschi Estate, Crimea
Hildebrandt, Katharina (Kaethe) - from Kharkov
Isaak, Elisabeth - from Tiege, Molotschna
Warkentin, Heinrich A - from Waldheim, Molotschna

KIEV

Dirks, Peter Wilhelm - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna
Esau, Jakob Jakob - from Halbstadt

ODESSA

Duerksen, Gerhard David - from Margenau, Molotschna
Esau, Peter Jakob - from Ekaterinoslav
Hausknecht, Abram David - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna
Kroeker, Susanna - from Ohrloff, Sagradovka, then Gnadenfeld, Slavgorod.
Loewen, Margaret - from Berdyansk
Mierau, Peter - from Ufa District
Peters, Peter - from Chortitza
Rakko, Wilhelm - from Waldheim, Molotschna
Sawatzky, Peter Jakob - from Wiesenfeld
Sawatzky, Woldemar Peter - from Karassan, Crimea
Thiessen, Isaak - from Chortitza

Zacharias, Dietrich - from Osterwick, Chortitza
Zacharias, Peter - from Osterwick, Chortitza

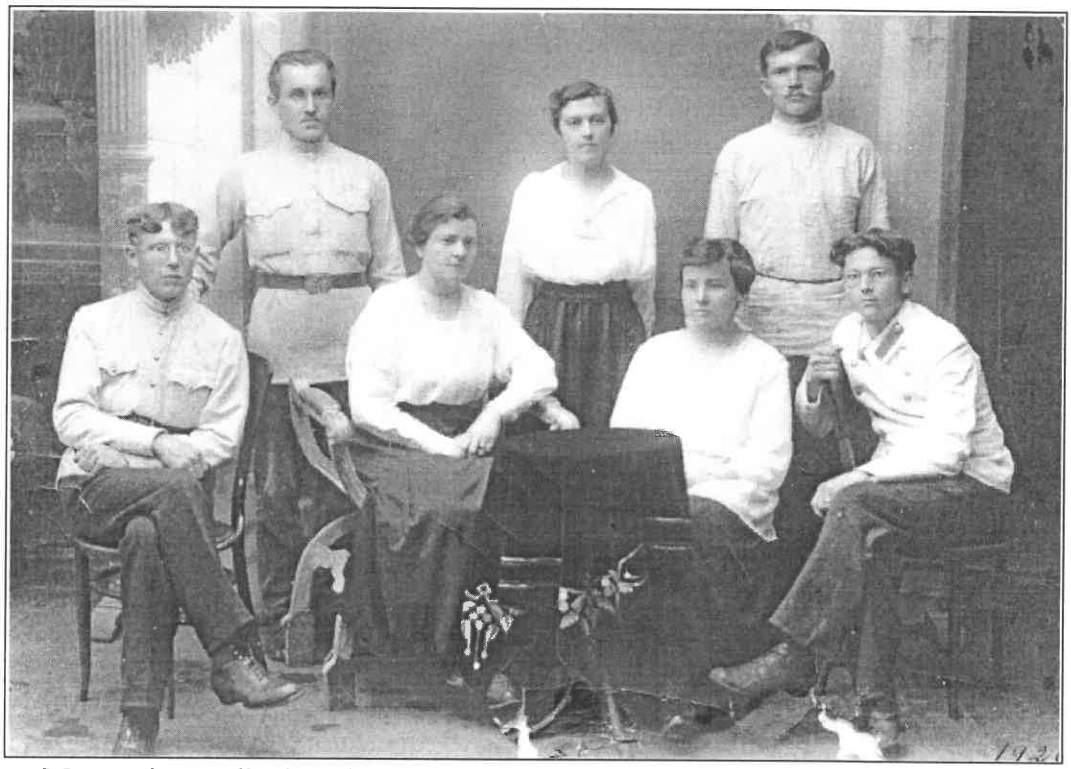
OMSK (1939-1940) (may have been a real medical college, could have been a technical school)
Epp, Jakob - from Ivanovka, Siberia
Epp, Johann (Hans) - from Ivanovka, Siberia
Epp, Johann (Hans) Jakob - from Ivanovka, Siberia
Huebert, Johann (Hans)
Isaak, Abram - from Nikolaifeld, Siberia
Isaak, Peter - from Nikolaifeld, Siberia
Regier, Abram - from Waldheim, Siberia
Willms, Johann (Hans) K - from Waldheim, Siberia

ST PETERSBURG MILITARY ACADEMY
Friesen, Johann Johann - probably from Ohrloff, Molotschna
Hamm, David Abraham - from Chortitza
Isaak, Johann Johann - from Tiege, Molotschna

SARATOV
Claassen, Rudolf Abraham- from Alt Samara

SIMFEROPOL
Dyck, Peter Isaak - from Karassan, Crimea
Martins, Anna - from Montanai Estate, Crimea
Neufeld, Gerhard Jakob - from Rosenort, then Ufa District
Neufeld, Hermann - from Samara
Neufeld, Nicholas Jakob - from Rosenort, then Ufa District
Rempel, Agatha - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna
Rempel, Maria - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna
Strauss, Johann - from Spat, Crimea
Toews, Aron Johann - Halbstadt, Molotschna

There was an institution called the "Omsk Medical College" in Omsk, Siberia, from which a number of Mennonites graduated in 1939 and 1940. Whether this was a university standard medical school or a technical college is not certain.



Mennonite medical students in Simferopol in 1920. l to r back row Hermann Neufeld, Samara; Agatha Rempel, Gnadenfeld; Johann Strauss, Spat; front row Nicholas J Neufeld, Ufa; Maria Rempel (sister of Agatha), Gnadenfeld; Anna Martins, Eupatoria, Crimea; Gerhard Neufeld (brother of Nicholas), Ufa

Graduates of the Omsk Medical College 1939 and 1940
Front row l to r: Hans K Wilms, Peter Isaak, Abram Isaak
Hans Epp. Back row l to r: Abram Regier, Jakob Epp,
Hans Huebert

LIST OF MENNONITE MEDICAL DOCTORS IN RUSSIA

(entries with an asterisk * also have a more detailed biography)

When the Mennonites initially migrated to South Russia, most of them were farmers, but there were among them a few other professions represented, such as wood and iron workers, seamstresses and tailors, and much to their detriment, also brewers. But no professional medical workers. The first person to have official medical training was Bernhard Paul Schellenberg, who graduated as a "Feldscher" (assistant medical officer) in 1862. He was then assumed to be a completely trained "doctor," since he was the only one having even close to legitimate medical education. Late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries Mennonites eventually caught up with the realty of requiring adequate medical care, with an increasing number of both men and women going to university medical schools. To cover some of the shortfall, in the meantime, a number of non-Mennonite physicians were also employed, the most outstanding example being Dr Erich Tavonius.

Among the Mennonite doctors there was a considerable number of specialists, probably the most common being in ophthalmology, likely because of the prevalence of trachoma in the region.

Buettner, H - Dorpat Medical School, first to Halbstadt, married a Mennonite Wiens, Muntau Hospital in 1913, during World War I to Alexanderkrone, served the seven villages in the area, bought house in Alexanderkrone, eventually arrested and exiled to the north,

Claassen, Nikolai David* - born in Neu-Halbstadt, practiced in Alexanderkrone, then Berdyansk, in unsettled times house surrounded and everyone arrested, tri-court hearing in Losovaya found them guilty, he and wife executed

Claassen, Rudolf Abraham* - born in Alt Samara, University of Saratov, hospital in Orenburg, to Winnipeg, Canada, where he practiced over 20 years

Dick, Johann - from Crimea, medicine at the University of Kharkov

Dirks, Peter Peter*- from Gnadenfeld, first teacher, then *Sanitaeter* on hospital train, wife a doctor, specialized in bacteriology, worked at Tiege Hospital with brother Wilhelm, arrested, exiled to the Ob River region, did not return

Dirks, Wilhelm - from Waldheim, Molotschna, University of Kharkov, practiced in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna

Dirks, Wilhelm Peter* - from Gnadenfeld, graduated medicine University in Kiev1924, one year in Muntau,1924, then1925 to Tiege Hospital for seven years, arrested 1933 and eventually exiled. Wife Rosine Lutscher also a physician, worked with him in Muntau and Tiege

Dueck, Franz - from Halbstadt, brother of Dr Peter Dueck, originally worked in the Alexanderwohl district, to Muntau Hospital as Chief-of-Staff after death of Dr Tavoniuas in 1927 , arrested and sent into exile

Dueck, Peter* - brother of Dr Franz Dueck, from Halbstadt, from August 1914 as surgeon, after 1916 Chief-of-Staff of Ohrloff Hospital, still Chief-of-Staff July 1920, later died in Muntau Hospital

Duerksen, Gerhard David *- from Margenau, Molotschna , Gnadenfeld *Zentalschule,* New Russian University Odessa, Chief-of-Staff Ohrloff Hospital 1910-1916, Internist,

purchased Xray equipment for the hospital in 1911, died 10 February 1916

Dyck, Franz - from Fuerstenau, Molotschna, University of Kharkov, practiced in Ohrloff, Molotschna

Dyck, Franz Isaak* - son of Isaak Dyck of Berdyansk, opened the *Deutsches Krankenhaus* in Berdyansk, official opening 15 February 1913, died 1920

Dyck, Johann Jakob* - son of Jakob Dyck and Sara Reimer, Telentschi Estate, Crimea, University of Kharkov, married Elisabeth Fehderau 26 May 1919 in Tiegenhagen, daughter Johanna born 5 April 1920 in Neu Halbstadt, drafted into the White Army, died of typhoid fever, brother Jakob a tent evangelist

Dyck, Peter Isaak* - born 20 April 1900 in Karassan, Crimea, University of Simferopol 1921, at Muntau Hospital 1926-1928, then to Accident Hospital Gronau, Moscow escape 1930, refugee camps in Germany for five years, to Brazil 1935, died 1987

Eisenbraun - associated with Dr Julius Heinrichs, probably at Ohrloff Hospital, Molotschna

Epp, Jakob - born 28 October 1915, from Ivanovka, Siberia, Omsk Medical School 1939

Epp, Johann (Hans) - born 5 July 1914, from Ivanovka, Siberia, Omsk Medical School 1940

Epp, Johann (Hans) Jakob - born 14 October 1920, from Ivanovka, Siberia, Omsk Medical School 1949, married Anna Isaak, Krutinka, Issyl Kul in 1956, Omsk in 1967, Bendry 1978, Germany 1983

Esau, Jakob Jakob* - son of Jakob Esau of Halbstadt, born 19 December 1856, won "Alexander Stipend", studied in Ekaterinoslav, then medicine in Kiev, practiced in the Chortitza villages, became ophthalmologist, opened eye clinic and small hospital in Ekaterinoslav in 1894. Worked at the hospital with Dr Waeber who was an intestinal and bladder surgeon. Jakob died 2 November 1927 in Ekaterinoslav. Engineer brother Johann became mayor

Esau, Peter Jakob - born 30 March 1891 in Ekaterinoslav, son of Dr Jakob Jakob Esau (ophthalmologist), University of Odessa, practiced in Ohrloff, Molotschna, had Russian wife Anna

Fast, George - practiced in the Ohrloff Hospital, Barnaul (Slavgorod) for some time - hospital built in Ohrloff in 1911

Friesen, Johann Johann - Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, Military Academy of St Petersburg, one of the original planners of the Ohrloff Hospital, later on staff

Friesen, Nikolai (Nicolaus)* - from Tiege, Molotschna, married, well-known, with Russian army in Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), said to have died of over-work

Grosheim, Dr von - set up medical practice in Neuenburg, Chortitza 23 November 1837 David Epp in his diary wondered "Will we know how to appreciate a doctor?"

Hamm, David Abraham* - from Chortitza, Military Academy of St Petersburg, assistant of Dr Theodor Hottmann, possibly 1910 and during World War I, Chief doctor of the First Orenburg Cossack Regiment, he and wife died in the typhus epidemic 1919-20

Hausknecht Abram David* - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, University of Odessa, practiced in Gnadenfeld, on the teaching staff of *Morija* Deaconess Home at least1915-1916, lived in Muntau at least until 1918, eventually to Canada in 1926, died 1938 in Winnipeg

Heinemann - doctor in Gnadenfeld in 1880, five of his children died of diphtheria in one night

Heinrichs - together with Dr Tavonius, one of the doctors at the *Morija* Deaconess Home in 1910,

lived in Mintau in 1918, likely on the staff of the Muntau Hospital

Heinrichs, Julius - from Chortitza Colony, after 1918 internist at Ohrloff Hospital, to Germany, then captured by Soviets and exiled to Siberia, also said to be an eye specialist.

Heinrichs, Julius - from Waldheim, ophthalmologist, fled to Germany during World War II, captured by the Soviets and exiled to the "East"

It is possible that these two Julius Heinrichs were the same person

Hildebrand, D - medical director of the Mennonite Field Hospital established by the Mennonites of Melitopol with the outbreak of World War I in 1914. It was officially dedicated 12 October 1914. He agreed to head the hospital without reimbursement

Hildebrandt (Katharina) Kaethe - from Kharkov, daughter of Nikolai Heinrich Hildebrandt, likely medicine in University of Kharkov, assistant to Dr Tavonius at Muntau Hospital July 1920

Hottmann, Theodor* - born 1866, Japanese prisoner of war 1905, well loved physician in Chortitza, Chief-of-Staff of the Chortitza Hospital 1903-1924, helped patients in typhus epidemic 1919-20, arrested 8 September 1937, died in prison spring 1939

Huebert, Johann (Hans) - Omsk Medical School 1940

Isaak, Abram - born 26 September 1908, from Nikolaifeld, Siberia, Omsk Medical School 1939

Isaak, Elisabeth Johanna* - born Tiege, Molotschna, younger sister of Dr Johann J Isaak, medical graduate University of Kharkov, followed her brother to Harbin, China, and stayed there after he left, eventually to USA, likely in 1957, died 22 October 1967 in Reedley, California

Isaak, Johann, Johann* - born 27 May 1884 Tiege, Molotschna, Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, Military Academy of St Petersburg,1910-1912 practiced, 1912 ophthalmology in St Petersburg, 1914 to Omsk, then Harbin, China by 1923, to USA in 1936, died 1956 in California

Isaak, Peter - born 23 October 1913, from Nikolaifeld, Siberia, Omsk Medical College 1939

Karlovitch, Boris - on staff at the Waldheim Hospital in the 1930s and 1940s, did some operations

Ketat - lived close to Muntau Hospital in 1918, likely on the staff

Klassen - on staff at the Muntau Hospital during the German occupation, 1941-1943, did appendectomy on Victor Koehn of Waldheim

Kroeker, Susanna* - born 20 October 1904 in Ohrloff, Sagradovka, family moved, 1935 to University of Odessa, graduated 1941, practiced in Sverdlovsk, died 1992

Loewen, Margaret*- born 7 October 1912 in Berdyansk, medicine at University of Odessa, eventually to Winnipeg, Canada, trained and then practiced as anaesthesiologist

Lutscher, Rosine (Rosa)* - wife of Dr Peter Wilhelm Dirks, worked with him in Muntau in 1924, then in Tiege Hospital for seven years, 1925-1933, was able to follow husband to Siberia, but health forced her to return south

Martens, Tusnelda Kornelievna* - born 7 June 1911 in Nikolayevka, Ignatyevo, daughter of K K Martens, medicine at Donetsk University, two years practice, eventually over-run by German forces, and escaped to Germany, some practice in Germany

Martins, Anna* - born 10 May 1898, daughter of Wilhelm and Maria Martins, from Montanai Estate near Eupatoria, Crimea, graduated University of Simferopol 1923 or 1924, to Canada 1926, practiced psychiatry in Hamilton, never married, died 1985

Meder, Hermann* - born about 1872 in east Prussia, worked in Chortitza, Chortitza, then in Sagradovka, died December 1917 of typhus

Mierau, Peter Heinrich* - born 1915 in Ufa district, University of Odessa, Great Trek to Germany,

eventually to Canada, after post graduate study worked as pathologist in Winnipeg

Neufeld, Gerhard Jakob* - born Rosenort, Molotschna , then to Ufa, University of Simferopol 1920-1924, brother of Nicholas, married Margaretha Dyck, 4 children, regional doctor in Davlekanovo, arrested early 1938, shot 6 days after arrest

Neufeld, Hermann - from Samara, University of Simferopol medical student in 1920

Neufeld, Nicholas Jakob* - born Rosenort, Molotschna, then to Ufa, University of Simferopol 1920-1924, brother of Gerhard, married Susanna Loewen, 4 children, to Canada 1924, southern Manitoba, then Winnipeg, died 1977

Oberlander - followed Dr E Tavonius as Chief-of-Staff of the Muntau Hospital when Tavonius died 29 April 1927, was a severe diabetic, died soon after he assumed the position

Pangratz, A - advertised in *Friedensstimme*, set up office in Kronau, Kherson Province, specialized in lung diseases

Pedkov, W L - regional doctor serviced the Muntau Hospital from its beginning until Tavonius arrived in 1900

Peters, Peter* - from Chortitza, University of Odessa, practiced in Ekaterinoslav and Gruenfeld, married Maria Esau, daughter of ophthalmologist Jakob Esau, 2 children, exiled, likely executed in 1938

Pinker, Otto - Ohrloff *Zentralschule*, Dorpat University, surgeon at Ohrloff Hospital when it opened 1910, in 1911 did 160 operations, German citizen so he left August 1914

Poppen, A von - medical director of Alexandrabad April 1910

Rakko, Wilhelm* - born 1912 in Waldheim, Molotschna, University of Odessa, wife Anna Dueck a trained midwife, Great Trek to Germany, Neuland Colony in Paraguay, where he and Anna worked in the hospital

Regier, Abram - from Waldheim, Siberia, Omsk Medical College 1940

Reimer - lived and worked in Sofievka, and villages of Jaloveiva, Eigenfeld, Neu-Schoenwiese, he travelled by horse and buggy in good and bad weather, he sutured lacerations

Rempel, Agatha - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, sister of Maria Rempel, University of Simferopol 1920, likely graduated about 1924

Rempel, Dietrich Dietrich* - born about 1890, likely from Gnadenfeld, graduatel at Dorpat University1914, assisted surgical clinic of Prof Szoege for one year, three years at the war front; advertized for a position as doctor in 1918

Rempel, Maria - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, sister of Agatha Rempel, University of Simferopol 1920, likely graduated about 1924

Sawatzky, Johann - in Karassan in the early 1920s, was very hospitable to the Simferopol medical students, fed them, lent them medical books, wife Margarita, he was sent to Siberia as doctor

Sawatzky, Peter Jakob* - born 14 June 1886 in Wiesenfeld, New Russian University of Odessa starting 1908, married Margaretha Reimer 1916, worked at Bethania Mental Hospital, then military hospital in Odessa, completed medical studies1918, then to Karassan, Naimann, Theodosia, arrested 18 November 1937, released 1946, to Kazakhstan, had anemia, died 1962

Sawatzky, Woldemar Peter* - born 22 July 1920 in Karassan, Crimea, son of Dr Peter Sawatzky, University of Odessa, practiced in Karaganda, to Germany in 1992

Schellenberg, Bernhard Paul* - Feldscher (assistant medical officer) in 1862, set up practice

as the "first doctor" in the Chortitza Colony

Schmidt - Medical Doctor Schmidt is listed as a friend, helping Johann Claassen in Petersburg in the early 1860s

Seil - medical degree at Dorpat University, on staff at Muntau Hospital in 1913

Seiler - on staff at Waldheim Hospital, starting 8 December 1908, for some time likely the only doctor on staff, 1918 lived in Muntau, likely on staff at Muntau Hospital

Stieda, Walter - ophthalmologist, office in Alexandrovsk, advertised in *Der Botschafter* in 1914 (but not in 1906 or 1910), he operated on trachoma, with his wife as assistant, apparently they were both large people.

Stieda Wilhelm* - from Riga, staff doctor at Bethania Mental Hospital, 1911-1913 wrote reports about the medical aspects of the hospital for *Deutsches Jahrbuch*, drafted into the military in 1914

Strauss, Johann (Hans) - from Spat, Crimea, University of Simferopol 1920, likely graduated in 1924

Stoesz, Alfred Peter* - born 1890 in Alexandertal, Samara, by 1930 accomplished physician in Saratov, thesis on brain injuries, functioned as neurologist and psychiatrist, to Alma Ata in 1942, died 1955

Sudermann, J - medical student who was assigned to help Dr D Hildebrand in the management of the Mennonite Field Hospital in Melitopol in October 1914

Tavonius, Erich Alexander* - 1872-1927, Dorpat University, for many years surgeon at Muntau Hospital and Chief-of-Staff, arrived in the region 1900, also Chief-of-Staff of the *Morija* Deaconess Home, died 1927, two daughters, Karin and Erika also doctors

Tavonius, Erika* - born 1908 in Halbstadt, Molotschna, youngest daughter of Dr Erich Tavonius, also a physician, refugee to Germany, had a son, to Paraguay with son and four foster daughters in 1948, worked in Filadelfia, then to Canada, to California, retired back to Canada 1985

Tavonius, Karin - born in Koenigsberg, East Prussia, second of four daughters of Dr Erich Tavonius, for a few years worked with her father in the Muntau Hospital in the 1920s, eventually to Germany, lived in Black Forest

Thiessen Isaak* - from Chortitza, University of Odessa, then also Munich, on staff Bethania Mental Hospital 1912-1927, arrested 1937, survived, lived near Moscow

Toews, Aron Johann* - born 15 July 1899, parents Johann Toews and Elisabeth Janzen, gold medal as outstanding student in Halbstadt, youngest medical student University of Simferopol, degree at age of 21, December 1920 infected mastoid curetted, died 30 December 1920, seven years older than brother J B Toews

Warkentin, Heinrich Andreas* - from Waldheim, Molotschna, University of Kharkov, never practiced, worked for CPR in Canada, helping Mennonite migration

Willms, Franz - very capable doctor who practiced in Halbstadt 1926-1929; helped Katharina Ratzlaff with her midwifery training during this time

Willms, Johann (Hans) K - from Waldheim, Siberia, Omsk Medical College 1940

Zacharias, Dietrich - from Osterwick, Chortitza, University of Odessa, practiced in Chortitza

Zacharias, Peter - from Osterwick, Chortitza, University of Odessa, until 1914 worked in the *Fabrikkrankenhaus* (Factory Hospital), Chortitza

DR NIKOLAI DAVID CLAASSEN

Nikolai David Claassen was the son of "President" David Johann Claassen, who was teacher at the Halbstadt *Zentralschule*, Chairman of the *Forstei* and also held many other positions. David himself was son of Johann Claassen, of Liebenau and the Kuban, one of the original founders of the Mennonite Brethren Church.

Nikolai studied medicine, and after graduation established his practice based in Alexanderkrone, serving the seven Juschanlee villages of the southern Molotschna, from Kleefeld to Steinfeld.

Nikolai married Helma Meier; the couple had two children: a daughter died young, and a son also called Nikolai.

Later Nikolai moved his practice to Berdyansk. During the Russian Civil War Berdyansk was not spared. At one time two White officers were hiding in the Claassen house as well as three Mennonite students. The house was surrounded by Red soldiers, and everyone was arrested and jailed. The White officers had escaped out a window, and a servant girl was soon released. Son Nikolai was also released into the custody of his grand parents, the David Claassens of Halbstadt.

Nikolai and wife Helma, however, were condemned to death by a "Triumvirate Court" based in Losovaya and were likely executed. Helma wrote a heart-rending letter to their small son Nikolai, asking him to have courage.

The three Mennonite students were exiled to a concentration camp for five years; one, Bernhard Teichrieb, died during imprisonment, of typhus; the other two survived.

Sources:

Enns, J J Notes

Friesen, P M, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)*, Raduga, Halbstadt, Taurida, 1911, pp133, 137

Toews A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer, Band 2*, self published, North Clearbrook, British Columbia, 1954, pp 47-49

DR RUDOLF ABRAHAM CLAASSEN
(1893-1953)

Rudolf Abraham Claassen was born 15 February 1893 in Alt Samara, European Russia. His parents were Abraham Claassen and Auguste, who were married 16 July 1882. Their three children were: Johann (1887), Rudolf (1893) and Justine (1894). His father died by 1898, while his mother died in 1922. As a young man Rudolf was not strong, although he always loved work, and was known for his friendliness.

In 1915, at the age of 22, Rudolf graduated from medicine in the University of Saratov. That same year on 15 July he married Selma Maria Bahlert. The Claassens had at least three children:

1. Daughter - born about 1920, died in a cholera epidemic, likely before 1922
2. Harry - born 22 May 1929
3. Theresa

In general, during the Russian Revolution and the subsequent famine, it was difficult for Rudolf to build up a practice. In 1919 he was Chief-of-Staff of a Health Clinic in eastern Russia, at Sterlitamak in the Baskir Republic. That is where their little daughter died in a cholera epidemic. In 1922, following the total crop failure in southern Russia, he was appointed physician at the Orenburg Mennonite Colony by the American Mennonite Relief agency. From there he went to Moscow, where he was active at the Metschnikoff Institute.

In September 1925 the Claassens were able to migrate to Canada. They traveled on the S S Montcalm, landing in Montreal 9 October. They were on the same ship as H F Klassen, later editor of *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*. The families became good friends. After studying hard for a year, Rudolf obtained his license to practice medicine in Canada. He first set up his practice in Lowe Farm, Manitoba, then in Morris. They settled in Winnipeg in 1930.

Rudolf had an idealized vision of medical practice, and often was not strict in charging for his work - a feature that some people took advantage of. Many hundreds of his patients, however, will have remembered him with respect and deep thanks. In his mind all other wishes and interests had to give way to his strong sense of medical duty.

Rudolf A Claassen

On one occasion he felt it was time that the two families of Klassen children (his own and the H F Klassens) should have their vaccinations. He loved children, so he felt he could best manage it without the parents being present. All eight were lined up and ready. When he tried the first in the line, the child let out a horrible screech, and ran off. Then all the children ran away. Despite his valiant efforts, Dr Claassen did not succeed in giving any of the children their vaccinations.

Claassen was one of the four main doctors serving Mennonite patients when Concordia Hospital was officially organized in 1931. The others were G Hiebert, N J Neufeld and H Oelkers. He, with his car, participated in a trip to the United States in 1931 in an effort to raise money for the hospital. They got almost $500.

Claassen was on the board of Concordia Hospital until 1934, and continued as a member of the medical staff until he died in 1953. He was an active member of the Mennonite Mission Church, located at Sargent Avenue and Furby Street

Rudolf Abraham Claassen had a massive stroke early in the year 1953, making it impossible for him to keep on seeing patients, which he found very frustrating. He died in his home in East St Paul, Winnipeg, at 11:30 AM on 8 August 1953. The funeral service was held in his home church on August 11. He was buried in the Elmwood Cemetery.

Doctors at Concordia, R Claassen, H Oelkers, N J Neufeld and G Hiebert

In his obituary it was mentioned that he brought many earthlings into this world and graciously continued to stand by them in his thirty eight years of practice. He was so dedicated in his service to mankind that he rarely took time off, seldom went on holidays. He was survived by his wife Selma Claassen, son Harry, daughter Theresa and a sister.

Sources:

Der Bote, Obituary of Rudolf A Claassen, 26 August 1953, p 6

Die Mennonitische Rundschau, Obituary of Rudolf A Claassen 19 August 1953, pp 1, 4

Dueck, Abe J, *Concordia Hospital 1928 - 1978*, Christian Press, Winnipeg, 1978, many pages

Dueck, Abe J, *Concordia hospital: Faith, Health and Community*, Concordia Hospital, 2003, many pages

Kroeker Nora, personal family history

DR PETER PETER DIRKS

(laboratory physician, bacteriologist)

Peter Peter Dirks was born in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, likely about 1891, one of six sons of Peter and Elisabeth Dirks. Brother Wilhelm Peter Dirks was probably two years younger. Despite the family being very poor, he went to the Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule* from 1904 to 1907. After graduation he immediately started teaching, continuing for five years, the last two in New York of the Ignatyevo Colony. In 1911 he joined the *Forstei*; this allowed him enough leisure time to pursue scientific reading and study. One of his teachers, Hermann Johann Penner had inspired him in this regard.

World War I transferred him to Moscow, and participation in the medical orderly service. His practical mindset brought him to the fore, so that he was in charge of a hospital train for two years. Some time during this part of his life he married, a doctor.

After the war he resumed his studies, mostly in an Agricultural Academy in Moscow. The famine forced Peter and his wife to settle further south. The Russian Civil War made it impossible for the couple to move, so his wife worked at several locations, latterly until 1925 in the Gnadenfeld district.

After the death of his wife, Peter studied bacteriology in Kiev for several years. After completion of his studies he helped his brother Dr Wilhelm Peter Dirks by working in the laboratory at the Tiege (Sagradovka) Hospital.

Soon after the arrest of brother Wilhelm in 1933, Peter was also arrested and exiled. For some years the two brothers were imprisoned together, but in the far north of Siberia their ways eventually parted. Dr Peter Peter Dirks was banished to the Ob River region, from which he never returned.

Surces:

Toews, A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, self published, North Clearbrook, British Columbia, 1954, p 41

DR WILHELM PETER DIRKS
and
DR ROSA LUTSCHER

Wilhelm Peter Dirks was born in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, likely about 1893. His parents were Peter and Elisabeth Dirks. They were very poor, but still tried very hard to grant their six sons a higher education. From 1906-1909 Wilhelm attended the Spat *Zentralschule* in the Crimea. His parents moved to the Sagradovka Colony, so he completed the last half of his final year in the Sagradovka *Zentralschule*. That same year Wilhelm taught school in Suvorovskaya, Caucasus, then 1910-1911 he was teacher in the Terek Colony. In 1914 he taught in a German school in the city of Orechov.

With the outbreak of World War I in 1914 Wilhelm was drafted into the *Sanitaetsdienst* (medical orderly alternate service). His interest in medicine was noticed, so he rose in the ranks, and was able to practice much of what he learned. In 1919 he began his four years of study in the medical faculty the University of Kiev. He added one year to his studies, specializing in surgery.

In 1924 Wilhelm worked at the Muntau Hospital under the direction of Dr Erich Tavonius. In 1925 Wilhelm took over the management of the hospital in Tiege, Sagradovka, and that same year married Dr Rosa Lutscher. She was a great help, and for seven years they worked together in the Tiege hospital. It was noted that Wilhelm was skillful in his medical management and very dedicated; he was much appreciated. His brother Peter, for a time, worked in the laboratory at the hospital, having specialized in bacteriology.

Unfortunately the Soviet government could not tolerate efficient and dedicated service, so Wilhelm was arrested in 1933, and first imprisoned in Melitopol, then in Kharkov, and finally in Minusinsk in the Omsk region of Siberia. At first his wife was not allowed to follow him, but later she and their children were able to join him in his imprisonment. However, Rosa had a lung condition, so she could not tolerate the harsh Siberian climate. She, and presumably the children, were therefore forced to return to the south. It was reported that Wilhelm was still alive in Siberia in 1941, but it presumed that he died soon thereafter.

Sources:
Enns, J J Notes
Toews, A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer, Band 2*, p 40, 41

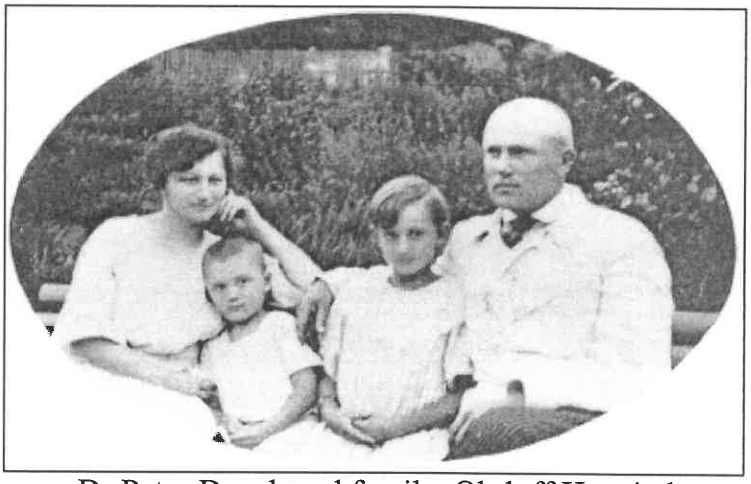
DR PETER DUECK

Peter Dueck was from Halbstadt, Molotschna. He was the brother of Dr Franz Dueck.

After completing medical school he likely had some additional surgical training. From August 1914 he was surgeon at the Ohrloff Hospital, Molotschna. When Dr Gerhard Duerksen died in February of 1916, Peter became Chief-of-Staff of the Ohrloff Hospital as well. He was still in that position in July of 1920.

Peter was married and had at least two children. He later died in the Muntau Hospital, cause unknown.

Sources:
Enns, Johann J Notes
Quiring, Walter and Helen, Bartel,
Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,
1963, p 82



Dr Peter Dueck and family, Ohrloff Hospital

DR GERHARD DAVID DUERKSEN
(1877-1916)

Gerhard David Duerksen was born in Margenau, Molotschna in 1877. He was the fifth of thirteen children of David Duerksen and Anna Martens. Father David was first a teacher, then also elected a minister. He was asked to serve in the church of Spat-Schoental in the Crimea in 1897, then was elected elder. He was called "Prince among Mennonite preachers." As Mennonite Brethren conference minister he travelled widely, including trips to many places in Russia, Germany and even America.

Gerhard attended *Dorfschule* in Margenau, then the *Zentralschule* in Gnadenfeld. He was able to study through the generosity of a family friend, Johann Janzen. Janzen said "let the boy study further, I will give him the money for it, and when he is working he can pay it back." Later, when Gerhard was earning money he wanted to repay Janzen. The response was "I am happy that you have studied, but I do not need the money; you may keep it." Some of this money went to help establish the Ohrloff Hospital. Gerhard studied medicine for five years at the New Russian University of Odessa. It is quite probable, since his parents moved to Margenau when he was already 20 years of age, that Gerhard never lived in the Crimea.

Maria and Gerhard Duerksen

In the summer of 1903 Gerhard gave seminars in the village of Wiesenfeld to prepare students for entry into higher level teacher training institutions. Presumably he himself had higher education than *Zentralschule* when he entered medicine. He was 26 years of age at the time, and was either already in medicine, or had almost completed his training.

Gerhard married Maria Guenther on 29 April 1906. She was born 25 March 1882. Her parents were estate owners Heinrich Dietrich Guenther and Elisabeth Reimer. The couple had three children:

1. Eugen - born 3 February 1907
2. Heinrich - born 1909
3. Elisabeth (Luise?) - born July 1914

Gerhard participated in the planning for the new Ohrloff Hospital in 1908-1910. In 1910 he travelled to Germany for further studies, for an additional two years. While in Germany he purchased Xray equipment for the hospital in 1910. When Gerhard returned, likely in 1912, he was an Internist, and was appointed the Chief-of-Staff.. Dr Otto Pinker, a German citizen, was the surgeon After the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Dr Pinker had to leave because he was a

German citizen, and was replaced by Dr Peter Dueck. Also after 1914 the hospital served military casualties.

Gerhard David Duerksen died 10 February 1916 at the age of 39. It was said that he became seriously ill, and then died after a heart attack. The more likely assumption is that he died of typhoid fever or typhus.

Wife Maria was therefore left with three small children.

She gave the two boys to her parents, who took them to Germany. Eugen remained in Germany, working as a journalist in Munich. He wrote at least two books "*Bericht des grossen Verrats*" and "*Wen sie verehren wollen.*" Eugen died in Germany in1985. Heinrich died 22 June1942, killed in World War II, presumably in battle. He was a lieutenant in the German Army.

Maria and her daughter stayed behind in Russia. They were eventually sent (*verschlept*) to the North of Russia. They lived through many difficult circumstances, eventually landing up in Chelyabinskaya, a district in the southern Ural Mountains. Maria died there 20 September 1954; daughter Elisabeth worked there as a dentist.

Sources:

Friesen, Rudy P, *Building on the Past*, Raduga Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 2004, p 344

Gloeckler, Helene, *Der Bote*, Das Orlower Krankenhaus und sein Gruender, 3 November 1999, pp 10, 11

Huebert, HelmutT, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, p 68. Estate Guenther (Heinrich D). Guenther lived in Ohrloff, estate was 2,000 dessiatines

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, p 329

DR FRANZ ISAAK DYCK
(1874-1920)

Dr Franz Dyck, Berdyansk

Franz Isaak Dyck was born 16 September 1874 in Berdyansk, South Russia. His father was Isaak Dyck, a prosperous grain merchant in Berdyansk. His mother was Helena Dueck. The couple was married on 15 March 1856; they had four children, of which Franz was the youngest.

Presumably most of Franz's undergraduate education was obtained in Berdyansk. He apparently obtained his medical degree in Kharkov.

Franz married Anna Neufeld on 29 December 1905 on the Rosenhof Brodsky Estate. Anna's parents were Johann Johann Neufeld and Katharina Wiens of the Rosenhof Estate. Anna was born 19 December 1882 on the estate. Franz and Anna had three children:

1. Leopold - born 29 May 1908 in Berdyansk, married Veronika Sudermann
2. Victor - born 21 May 1911 in Berdyansk, married Hedwig Unruh
3. Arnold - born 1914 in Berdyansk, married Frances Howard

Franz must have been in active practice when he opened up the *Deutsches Krankenhaus* in Berdyansk. The official opening on 15 February 1913 was mentioned by advertising in *Der Botschfter* in January of 1914.

Franz died 6 April 1920 in Berdyansk age 45, cause not known.

Anna and the children eventually migrated to Canada. All three children reached adulthood.

Advertising in *Der Botschafter*
17 January 1914

Sources:

Advertising *Deutsches Krankenhaus* open since 15 February 1913, *Der Botschafter*, 4 January 1914; 10 January 1914;17 January 1914

Dyck Family History

DR JOHANN JAKOB DYCK
(1889-1920)

Johann Jakob Dyck was born in 1889, the son of Jakob Dyck and Sara Reimer of Neu Telentschi Estate, Crimea. Both Telentschi and Neu Telentschi Estates were near the Mennonite village Tchongrav in central Crimea.

Johann was the sixth of nine children of Jakob and Sara. Older brother Jakob was a tent missionary who was murdered during the Russian Revolution. Younger sister Katharina married Alexander Ediger.

Dr Johann Dyck (seated)

Family of Dr Johann Dyck, Wife Elisabeth (nee Fehdrau) and daughter Johanna

Johann studied medicine at the University of Kharkov likely from 1915 to 1919. He married Elisabeth (Liese) Fehdrau on 26 May 1919 in Tiegenhagen, Molotschna. She was the eldest daughter of Jakob J Fehdrau and Maria Bahnmann. Johann and Elisabeth were married probably shortly after he had finished his medical exams. The couple had a daughter, Johanna, born 5 April 1920 in Neu Halbstadt, Molotschna.

During the Russian Civil War the White Army assigned him to Odessa to establish a centre for wounded soldiers. After a short period of service in the White Army Johann caught typhoid fever and died. Daughter Johanna was born before he died, so his death was before April of 1920.

Johann was called a gentleman, polite, and a Christian who cared for people and was willing to help.

Sources:

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 191, 192, 200

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 140, 213, 346

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 86, 87, 112

DR PETER ISAAK DYCK
(1900-1987)

Dr Peter Dyck as young man

Peter Isaak Dyck was born 20 April 1900 in Karassan, Crimea. His parents were Isaak Dyck and Maria Pankratz. He probably attended *Dorfschule* and *Zentralschule* in Karassan. He then went to the *Kommerzschule* in Alexanderkrone, followed by *Gymnasium* in Simferopol, which he completed in 1919. He became a member of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church.

Peter studied in the medical faculty University of Simferopol, some of the time being during the famine of 1921-1922. His studies were periodically interrupted during the Russian Civil War.

During this time Professor Stefko, an anatomist, wrote a scientific paper about the famine. Also during the war Peter spent some time in a non-combatant service; he was secretary of a committee that prepared documentation for various soldiers, including Mennonites. He interned at the University of Kasany, on the Volga, and completed his medical studies in 1926.

Dr Peter Dyck

Manya (Maria) Bartel wife of Dr Peter Dyck

Peter worked at the Muntau Hospital from 1926 to 1928, the first part of this time with Dr Erich Tavonius (who died May 1927). There he met Manya (Maria) Bartel.

Manya was born on 2 December 1900 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna. Her parents were Franz Bartel and Helena Voth. She had trained as a nurse in Halbstadt, and worked in the Muntau Hospital from 1926.

Peter and Manya were married 5 August 1928. They had four children:

1. Eugen - born after 1928 in Russia, died by 1930
2. Gisela - married Willy Arthur Rebischke 1956 in Witmarsum, had one daughter
3. Ekkehart Guenther - born 2 December 1937, to Canada 1971, married twice, lived in Winnipeg, died 14 September 1996 in Winnipeg
4. Rosvita - born 1944, teacher, single, died of cancer 31 October 1989 in Curitiba

Peter took over the Accident Hospital at Luxemburg (formerly Gronau) in the Mariupol region. He was asked to leave by the GPU because of his Christian orientation. "As Christian I could not represent atheists." For the same reason he did not accept the appointment as surgeon at the port hospital of Mariupol. The following night they fled to Moscow. Apparently the authorities in Mariupol looked for them the next day.

Peter and Manya were then able to escape to Germany on 30 November 1930. Peter worked

as physician in the refugee camps Hammerstein and Moelln for five years. During this time he studied tropical medicine in Hamburg; they lived in Wandsbeck and Altona. They then migrated to Brazil.

From 1935 to 1953 Peter and Manya worked in the jungle, Krauel in Santa Catarina. Peter said "God has freed us from Communism in Russia, we should, and want to help others." From 1953 to 1976 the Dycks worked in Witmarsum, Parana, where he was actively involved in medical and social work. Peter felt that "My life has been very good. God has richly blessed us; we have to do more." Manya worked together with husband Peter in most of their locations. Peter declared that Manya was his conscience.

Wife Manya died 8 August 1977. She had circulatory problems for some time. Peter then moved to Vila Guarda in Boqueirao, Curitiba. He had a fractured leg, and two heart attacks; despite these setbacks he was always satisfied and thankful.

Dr Peter Isaak Dyck died 2 June 1987, at the age of 87 years, one month and 12 days. He was survived by two brothers and one sister in Canada, and three of his four children.

Sources:

Der Bote, Obituary of Peter Dyck, 4 September 1987, p 6; 15 July 1987 p 6

Die Mennonitische Rundschau, Obituary of Maria Dyck, 26 October 1977, p 11

Durksen, Martin, *Die Krim war unsere Heimat*, Selbstverlag, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, pp 262-264

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 1*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, Simferopol p 416

Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963, p 46

DR JAKOB JAKOB ESAU
(1856-1927)

Jakob Jakob Esau was born 19 December 1856 in Halbstadt, Molotschna. He was the second of eight children of Jakob Esau and Katharina Neufeld. Johann Esau, later engineer and mayor of Ekaterinoslav, was the fourth child in the family. Father Jakob was the *Schulz* of Halbstadt. Both sons Jakob and Johann applied for and received the "Alexander Stipend," which was designed to encourage Mennonite students into higher education. Both boys attended a *Gymnasium* in Ekaterinoslav. Johann then went on to study engineering, while Jakob studied medicine in Kiev.

Dr Jakob Esau

Jakob first practiced medicine in the Chortitza villages, probably Chortitza, then mostly Rosenthal. He subsequently went on to specialize in ophthalmology. He opened up an eye clinic and a small hospital in Ekaterinoslav in 1894. Dr Wuitsch worked at the hospital in 1910. At some time, certainly 1910-1914, he was joined by Dr Waeber, who was an intestinal and bladder surgeon. A dentist, Dr S L Sotnik also joined in 1914. The hospital, known as the "*Deutsches Krankenhaus*," boasted an Xray department used for diagnostic films, and also treatment of skin and other diseases. There were public wards and single hospital rooms.

Deutſches Krankenhaus
für Chirurgiſche- und Augenkrankheiten
von
Dr. Eſau und Dr. Waeber
in Jekaterinoſlaw, Fabritſchnaja.
Ständige Betten
in allgemeinen und einzelnen
Zimmern. pg676
Röntgeninſtitut zur Durchleuchtung kranker Knochen, Gelenke Lunge, Herz, Magen, Darm, Nieren, Blaſe uſw.
Behandlung mit Röntgenſtrahlen der Krankheiten der Haare, Haut, Knochen, innerer Organe als auch bei Gebärmutterblutungen und Frauenleiden.

Advertising in *Der Botschafter*
14 (30) January 1914

Jakob married Susanna Toews (nee Heese) on 12 June 1886. She was daughter of Heinrich Heese II, mill owner and businessman, and Marie Thiessen. She had two children from her first marriage. Jakob and Susanna then had six more children:

1. Luisa - born 1887 in Chortitza, Chortitza, died 25 January 1890 in Rosenthal
2. Alexander - born 1888 in Rosenthal, Chortitza, married Helena Klassen, died 1944
3. Peter - born 1891 in Rosenthal, married, killed in troop train bombing
4. Maria - born 1892 in Rosenthal, married Dr Peter Peters, he was arrested and executed 1938, Maria to Canada, died in Windsor Ontario in May 1974
5. Nicolai - born 11 June 1894 in Rosenthal, in White Army, escaped to Constantinople, to USA, married 3 times, died 3 November 1973
6. Michael - born 30 January 1896 in Rosenthal, married, died in Vancouver 1979

The family quite probably continued to live in Rosenthal for some time after Jakob opened the eye clinic and hospital in Ekaterinoslav in 1894.

Jakob Jakob Esau died in Ekaterinoslav on 2 May 1927 at the age of 70 years. It is doubtful if the clinic and hospital functioned after his death. As of 2010 there is no trace of the hospital remaining.

Wife Maria and at least three of the children eventually escaped to North America. Maria died 18 October 1950 in Windsor, Ontario. It quite probable that she went to Windsor to be with her daughter Maria Peters, who also died in Windsor, but 24 years later, in May of 1974.

Sources:

Der Botschafter, advertising (all on page 1), 1 January 1910, 5 January 1910, 12 January 1910, 15 January 1910, 1 January 1914, 4 January 1914, 10 January 1914, 14 January 1914, 17 January 1914

Epp, George K, *Mennonites in Russia*, Chapter "Urban Mennonites," CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1989, pp 254-257

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 91, 95, 101

Huebert, Helmut T, personal observations

Vogt, Willi, *Mennonitische Ahnenforschung Chortitza: Bilder Gesundheitswesen*, p 1

DR NIKOLAI (NICOLAUS) FRIESEN

Dr Nikolai Friesen and wife

From Tiege, Molotschna. He was married. Was well known. He volunteered to serve as doctor in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Picture has him in uniform, so he could have actually been in the army, or in the *Sanitaetsdienst*. He died in service, said to have died of exhaustion, although it is more likely to have been some disease such as typhus.

Sources:
Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, p 180

DR DAVID ABRAHAM HAMM

David Abraham Hamm was originally from Chortitza. He studied medicine at the Military Academy of St Petersburg. He was assistant to Dr Theodor Hottmann for some time, not sure when, but likely at the Chortitza Hospital, where Dr Hottmann was Chief-of-Staff. It was most likely from 1910 on and into the time of World War I. Later he was chief doctor of the First Orenburg Cossack Regiment, probably during the latter part of World War I and on into the period of the Revolution and Civil War.

Dr David Hamm and his wife died in the typhus epidemic of 1919-20.

Sources:
Huebert,Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, St Petersburg pp 366, 375
Huebert, Helmut T, *Biography of Theodor Hottmann*

DR ABRAM DAVID HAUSKNECHT
(1858-1938)

Abram David Hausknecht was born 21 January 1858 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna. His parents were David Hausknecht, born 28 February 1834, and Katharina Braun, born 3 February 1837. His forefather, likely David's grandfather, was born in Switzerland, came to Chortitza in the 1830s, was very interested in nature, and was the first teacher of a secondary school in the Chortitza region. His son David was the first teacher of the *Bruderschule* in Gnadenfeld. This was Abram's father.

Morija Deaconess Home Staff, 1915-1916
Dr Abram Hausknecht, seated, front row far right

Abram likely had his initial schooling in Gnadenfeld, then obtained his medical degree from the University if Odessa. He subsequently practiced medicine in Gnadenfeld. He was also on the teaching staff of the *Morija* Deaconess Home, certainly 1915-1916.

Abram married Elisabeth Lange, who was born about 1868. The couple had three children who reached adulthood:

1. Victor - married Helena Wieler, one daughter, Hildegard, born about 1919
   - Victor was killed during the Russian Revolution
   - both Helena and Hildegard went to Canada in 1926 with the family, Hildegard stayed single, has died
2. David - came to Canada 1926 with the family, married Bertha Wieler (John Wieler's aunt)
   At least 6 children: Victor, Kaethe, Walter, Helen, Sigrid, Theodor (Teddy)
3. Eugene - came to Canada 1926 with the family
   - changed his name to Lang or Lange
   - at least one daughter Elisabeth, who lives in Ottawa
   - head of Diploma School of Agriculture in Manitoba

Abram and Elisabeth had 2 or 3 other children who died at an early age

The Hausknecht family migrated to Canada, arriving in May 1926, and was first received in Niverville, Manitoba, where they lived on a farm. They were listed as Abram D Hausknecht (age 68), wife Elisabeth (58), children: Helena (28) with daughter Hildegard (7), David (27) and Eugen (20). Helena was the daughter-in-law whose husband had been killed in the Russian Revolution

Abram did not attempt to pass the Canadian medical exams or actively practice medicine in Canada, although the Mennonite community did call on him to practice some medicine, especially on children. Eventually they lived on Ellen St in Winnipeg. Physically, Abram had a nice big beard, was not tall (five foot eight or nine) and was friendly.

Abram David Hausknecht died 15 (19?) January 1938 in Winnipeg, Canada

Sources:

Family history: John Wieler, Elisabeth Ahssan, Victor Hausknecht

Goerz, H, Die *Molotschnaer Ansiedlung*, Echo-Verlag, Steinbach 1950/51 Buch 7, p 109

Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, self published 1963, printed in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, p 73

Refugee Lists, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 29 September 1926, p 9

DR THEODOR JOHANN HOTTMANN
(1866-1939)

Theodor Johann Hottmann was born in 1866, and lived in Chortitza, Chortitza. He was a trained physician, and was appointed Chief-of-Staff of the Chortitza (Rosenthal) Hospital from 1903 on. He volunteered to serve in the medical corps during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. He was taken prisoner by the Japanese, and was imprisoned in Port Arthur in 1905. He was released at the conclusion of the war later that year. Hottmann came back to the hospital in Rosenthal, and resumed his position .as Chief-of-Staff. Later, when two new hospitals were built, he took over the Regional Hospital, "Semskaya Bolynyiza." In 1924 it was said that he had been the Chief-of-Staff of the Chortitza Hospital for 21 years. Presumably this was the Semskaya Bolynyiza Hospital. Dr David Abraham Hamm was his assistant.

Dr Theodor Hottmann

In an announcement published in *Der Botschafter* in January of 1910, it was remarked that Dr Hottmann was returning from abroad, so presumably he had been gone for some time. He was resuming his practice in Chortitza, with office hours from 8-12 AM, daily except for Sundays. He specialized in women's disorders, helped with deliveries, did surgery and saw skin diseases.

Dr Hottmann especially helped those who were ill and dying during the typhus epidemic of 1919-1920. The epidemic was particularly vicious in the Chortitza-Rosenthal region, but he helped the patients, despite knowing that the disease was contagious. When homes were vacated in the area, because people were migrating to Canada in the mid 1920s, he bought a house in the middle of Chortitza village, where he and his wife Maria then lived.

Dr Hottmann was considered to be a very compassionate and skillful physician and surgeon; he was especially known for his excellent care of women and their conditions.

It came as a shock when Dr Hottmann was arrested and imprisoned on 8 September 1937; he was sent to the prison in Zaporozhye. Wife Maria often took things like clean laundry to the prison, but one day she was told that he was no longer there. During his imprisonment he told a cell-mate that he had been tortured, but had not signed a confession. He knew full well that this meant that he would be executed. A fellow prisoner assumed that he was eventually tortured to death - he would not have been given the "humane" escape of simply being shot in the back of the head.

Theodor Johann Hottmann died in prison in the spring of 1939. His body was dumped into a nearby valley. During the German occupation, in 1942, wife Maria was able to find the body and give him a proper burial in the Chortitza cemetery.

Sources:

Der Botschafter, announcement, 12 January 1910, p 1
Enns, J J Notes; Klassen, Isaak P, Notes; Letkeman Notes
Vogt, Willi, *Mennonitische Ahnenforschung Chortitza: Bilder Gesundheitswesen*, p 1
Toews, A A *Mennonitische Maertyrer Band 2*, self published, North Clearbrook, British Columbia, 1954, pp 50-51
Yoder, H C, Letter to the editor, *Mennonitische Rundschau*, 16 January 1924, p 1

DR ELISABETH JOHANNA ISAAK
(1894-1967)

Elisabeth Johanna Isaak was born in Tiege, Molotschna 20 July 1894; her parents were Johann Philipp Isaak and Katharina Janz. The couple had 13 children, of whom six survived into adulthood. Johann was the eldest, and became a physician. Next were Phillip, Jakob, Margaret, Elisabeth and Marie. Elisabeth was therefore the second youngest of the surviving children. She likely attended elementary school in Tiege, then *Zentralschule* in Ohrloff. Brother Johann took his medical training in St Petersburg, but Elisabeth stayed closer to home, graduating with her medical degree from the University of Kharkov. She had additional training as a pediatrician. She remained single.

Elisabeth went to Harbin, China, with her physician brother Johann, likely about 1923.. She cared for many of the Mennonite refugees, who came across the Amur River ice beginning in 1930. One of the main conditions which caused problems was trachoma, a common eye condition, which no country in North America would allow to enter. Presumably she and her brother treated some of the Mennonites for this condition.

Johann and his wife Maria left Harbin for North America in 1936. Elisabeth seems to have stayed in Harbin considerably longer, but she finally did also migrate to the United States, probably about 1957. She obtained her Naturalization Papers on 14 December 1962. For some time she lived in Los Angeles, but eventually died in Reedley, California on 22 October 1967, and was buried in Shafter. She likely did not practice medicine in the United States.

The longest surviving Harbin refugee, Nick Friesen, of Reedley, California, remembers being a pall-bearer at the funeral of Elisabeth Johanna Isaak.

Sources:

Cotter, Dean, of Sparks, Nevada, USA, *Isaak Family History*
Friesen, Nick, Reedley, California, personal recollection
Harms, Wilmer A, *Escapes from Russia*, Hearth Publishing, Hillsboro, Kansas, 1998, pp 101-103, 183
Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol 3, p 54, 172

DR JOHANN JOHANN ISAAK
(1884-1956)

Johann Johann Isaak was born 27 May 1884 in Tiege, Molotschna. His parents were Johann Philipp Isaak and Katharina Janz. Johann was the eldest of 13 children. Of these only six reached adulthood; a younger sister, Elisabeth also became a physician. Johann attended the elementary school in Tiege, then *Zentralschule* in Ohrloff. He was baptized at the age of 16, likely by his grandfather, Elder Jakob Janz of Friedensfeld, and was accepted as a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church. He attended a *Gymnasium* in Ekaterinoslav for further education. He completed his medical studies at the Military Academy at St Petersburg in 1910. From 1910 - 1912 he practiced as a physician, likely at the Alexandrabad sanatorium near Einlage, Choritiza.

In December of 1911 Johann married Maria Verich. The couple had four children: Konstantin (born about 1913), Waldemar (born about 1916), Margaretha (born about 1918), and Natalie, who died "early."

In 1912 Johann started specialized training in ophthalmology in St Petersburg. With the outbreak of World War I in 1914 he was designated as a military physician in Omsk, Siberia, also starting a private practice in that city. He migrated to Harbin, China, in 1923, following his family, which was already there. He left Russia in part because of the deteriorating conditions, but also wanted to provide a more stable environment for his family.

Dr Johann J Isaak and his wife Maria

In Harbin Johann could provide medical care for eye problems of the Russian people living in the area, but soon he was also treating wealthy Chinese as well as diplomats. In the early 1930s Mennonite refugees fled across the winter ice of the Amur River, eventually arriving in Harbin. Johann was chairman of the Relief Committee, and helped many of these refugees, often providing contacts to help them to escape to North or South America. He first approached the Canadian Consul as to whether they would allow Mennonites to settle in Canada. He was flatly refused. Canada did not allow Chinese immigrants. The American Consul displayed immediate interest. His report, with the help of Johann Friesen, eventually reached President Hoover. The decision was to allow 250 immigrants in 16 months. Johann and his sister, Elisabeth, also a physician, now had to make sure the emigrants were physically fit and free of trachoma.

A few years later the Isaaks sent their two sons, Konstantin and Waldemar, to the United States to pursue graduate education. Konstantin also became a practicing physician. Refugee Anna Klassen worked as a tutor in the Isaak home.

Johann continued to work in Harbin until 1936. Johann and Mary were then able to escape to the United States, sailing from Yokohama, Japan, landing in the USA aboard the M S "Chichibu Mary" on 3 December 1936. They settled in California, close to their two sons, who had earlier settled there. It is unlikely that Johann practiced medicine in the USA. About 1954 Johann became seriously ill, and died two years later.

Dr Johann Johann Isaak died on 31 August 1956, in Vallejo, California. On his gravestone is written "*Im Kampf gesiegt durch Christum.*" (Victorious in Christ).

Sources:

Cotter, Dean, from Sparks, Nevada, USA, *Isaak Family History*

Harms, Wilmer A, *Escapes from Russia*, Hearth Publishing, Hillsboro, Kansas, 1998, pp 101-103, 148

Huebert, H T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp344, 345, 347, 367, 368, 375

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, p 85

DR SUSANNA KROEKER
(1904-1992)

Susanna Kroeker was born 20 October 1904 in Ohrloff (Village No 6) Sagradovka Colony. Her parents were Klaas Kroeker and Maria Friesen There were 11 children in the family: Maria (1895), Agnes (1897 - married Peter Buller), Katharina (Tina) (1899 - married Heinrich Penner, to Canada in 1925), Helena (1900), Nicholas (1902), Susanna (1904), Anna (1906 - married another Peter Buller, she is mother of Helmut Buller), Heinrich (1909), Johann (Hans) (1912), Louise (1914), Erwin (1919). Susanna was therefore the sixth of 11 children. Father Klaas owned a brick factory.

About 1914 the family moved to Tiege, also of the Sagradovka Colony, in preparation for a possible move to Canada. About at the time of the final sale, World War I broke out, changing all the plans. With the Revolution and Civil War the whole region was terrorized by bandits, such as Makhno. During some of this time Susanna and brother Nicholas visited their older sister Agnes and her husband. From 1924 on conditions improved somewhat.

When collectivization started in 1927 the family moved to western Siberia, to the Barnaul (Slavgorod) settlement , and there to the village of Uglovoj (Gnadenfeld). At that time the family consisted of the parents and children Nicholas, Susanna, Anna, Heinrich and Louise. This village was situated in the very northern tip of the colony. By then church services were only held in people's homes; Susanna became an active member of the local choir. In 1930 the family moved back to South Russia, to Tiege of the Sagradovka Colony

Susanna likely had her initial schooling in Ohrloff, then Tiege, followed by the Barnaul Colony, then possibly Tiege again. She must have been a good student, and must have had additional education elsewhere in South Russia. In 1935 she entered medical studies at the University of Odessa. She graduated in 1941. Part of this time, possibly the last two years, was likely additional training, since she then practiced as an ophthalmologist.

Susanna married; her husband's name was Leo Pan. The couple had one son, Gena. He married a woman named Lida, and they had a child named Nastja.

Upon graduation doctors in the Soviet Union did not have a choice of where to practice, so Susanna was assigned to work at a hospital in Sverdiovsk (Ekaterinburg) in the south central Ural Mountains.. She seems to have spent her entire professional life in that city. She died there in 1992.

Both parents, Klaas and Maria Kroeker, also died in Russia.

Sources:
Buller, Anna (nee Kroeker) autobiography
Buller Family History
Mennonite Historical Atlas, Barnaul (Slavgorod) Colony, p 50

DR MARGARET LOEWEN
(1912-1999)

Margaret Loewen was born 7 October 1912 in Berdyansk, South Russia. Her parents were Kornelius Jakob Loewen and Helena Bergmann. They originally lived in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, then moved to Berdyansk some time after 1905. Kornelius was a teacher. They had four children:

1. Helena - born 30 June 1901, died in Winnipeg 1 February 1967
2. Maria - born 1905 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, died in Winnipeg 20 December 1977
3. Kornelius - born 7 October 1912 in Berdyansk (twin of Margaret), married Linda Mueller
4. Margaret - born 7 October 1912, twin of Kornelius

Because of the unrest in the region of Berdyansk, the family moved back to the Molotschna, in 1920, where father Kornelius continued teaching.

In 1929, at the age of 17, Margaret began her training as nurse, likely in Halbstadt. After completion of her studies she was assigned to work in a German region near Odessa. Feeling that she was inadequately trained, she decided on further studies. She entered the medical faculty at the University of Odessa in 1934, graduating with her medical degree in 1939. She worked in Odessa as a physician until the German retreat in 1943. Margaret with her mother and a sister then fled to the Warthegau area of Poland, where she worked in a German hospital. A year later they had to flee again, this time into Germany itself. Here she had to redo her medical examinations, in German.

Margaret Loewen

In 1949 mother Helena with her three daughters Helena, Maria and Margaret, migrated to Canada, settling in Winnipeg. Since Margaret did not know English, she worked as a nurse, but studied diligently in her spare time. She passed the medical exams in 1954, enjoying the studying so much that she decided to specialize in anaesthesia. She also passed these examinations, then worked as an anaesthetist at St Boniface Hospital, being officially appointed to the department in 1957. She continued in this position for 22 years, therefore retiring in 1979.

In her spare time Margaret enjoyed travel, concerts, theatre, as well as fellowship with her friends and fellow believers at the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. She served as deacon at her church for five years.

In time Margaret moved closer to some of her relatives in Mississauga, Ontario, but even there she participated in the small local Mennonite congregation. Margaret Loewen died on 4 January 1999 in Mississauga Ontario at the age of 86 years. The funeral was at the chapel of the funeral home on 9 January with a Memorial Service at the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on 15 January 1999.

Sources:
Der Bote, Obituary, 16 September 1999, p 7
Newsletter of the Canadian Journal of Anaesthesia, January 1957
Rempel and Loewen family history

DR TUSNELDA KORNELIEVNA MARTENS
(1911-2000)

Tusnelda Martens

Tusnelda Kornelievna Martens was born 7 June 1911 in Nikolayevka (No 5), Ignatyevo Colony. Her parents were Kornelius Kornelius Martens and Sara Friesen. Tusnelda was the fourth of eight children born between 1905 and 1925. Her father was a teacher and administrator.

In 1912 the family moved to St Petersburg, where her father studied for 2 years, then in 1914 it was to Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, where they lived in the school building. Kornelius was instructor and rector of the Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule*.

On 6 January 1922 Kornelius was forced from his position and their home, because of the Communist regime refusing to employ people of faith as teachers. The family moved to Grossweide, still in the Molotschna, where he tried to farm, but was also elder of the local MB Church.

On 7 July 1929 the Martens celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary, with all the children and the whole church participating. In 1930 they were ordered to leave the region; Kornelius and the four elder children, including Tusnelda, left by wagon, to stay with relatives outside the Grossweide region

Kornelius was eventually employed as teacher of Latin and German and as bookkeeper in a medical library in Donetsk (Stalino). In time the whole family moved to Donetsk, although the four girls lived in a room 8 km from the rest of the family

Tusnelda began medical school in Donetsk in1933. She attended the Maxim Gorky Donetsk State Medical University, which had just been founded in 1930. Mother Sara died 28 February 1934; father married Anna Klassen in August 1934. Father Kornelius was arrested on 6 August 1937, and executed 15 January 1938. Tusnelda graduated from medicine some time soon after her father was arrested, likely in 1938. She was, of course, afraid that the status of her father would jeopardize her position at the university

After graduation Tusnelda was assigned by the government to work elsewhere for two years. She was sentenced to exile in Siberia, but through a series of adventures escaped, and after the German invasion of Russia, worked in a military hospital in German occupied Donetsk At the hospital she met a banker turned tank commander named Johann (Hans) Carl Heinrich Volckmann, who seemed to be interested in her. His wife and four children had all been tragically killed in a phosphorous bombing raid on Hamburg.

With the German retreat Tusnelda followed her military hospital back into Germany in 1943, at first being located 30 km from Berlin. Tusnelda and Hans were married in1944. For some time they stayed with the parents of Hans in Kiel, northern Germany, then settled in Hamburg, and worked at any type of work they could find.

Tusnelda was interested in her heritage; in 1947 she contributed the biography of her father

Tusnelda and Hans in Vancouver, Canada

Kornelius Kornelius Martens for the book "*Mennonitische Maertyrer*," edited by A A Toews.

Hans and Tusnelda moved to Canada in 1952, settling in Vancouver, British Columbia. Both tried to work at anything they could find, Hans mainly in construction, Tusnelda in nursing type of work. They actually bought a house in Vancouver. Because he was not able to find an occupation that suited him, Hans returned to Germany in 1956, Tusnelda in 1957. Tusnelda's sisters Sara and Elfriede bought the house.

Tusnelda took a medical refresher course in Germany, and started again working as a physician. Unfortunately Hans died of a severe heart attack on 26 March 1958. Tusnelda continued to live in Hamburg and continued to work as a doctor.

Tusnelda married Otto Kaehler about 1960. He worked in a business his family had established; the company delivered fuel such as heating oil and coal. He had one daughter from a previous marriage, Isela. The couple liked to travel a lot; they owned a holiday trailer on the Ploenersee, about one and a half hours drive north of Hamburg, at which they spent considerable time.

Tusnelda and Otto Kaehler in 1970

Tusnelda likely retired from medical practice around 1975. Otto died 22 May 1980. Tusnelda belonged to a Baptist church in Hamburg. She continued to travel for holidays, often with her younger sister Elfriede, for example to the Canary Islands, the Azores and Hawaii. She also enjoyed gardening.

Tusnelda moved into an assisted living facility because she had difficulty managing on her own. She had a number of operations, including an abdominal exploration. She developed cancer of the thyroid, and had increasing difficulty talking. Tusnelda Volckmann Kaehler (nee Martens) died of her cancer on 14 March 2000 in Hamburg, at the age of 88.

Sources:

Huebert, Helmut T, *Kornelius Martens: Our Skillful Advocate*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, many pages

Martens and Huebert family history

Volckmann, Tusnelda geb. Martens "Lebenslauf meines Vaters Kornelius Kornelius Martens" published in *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, editor A A Toews, Winnipeg, Canada, 1949, pp 207-213

DR ANNA (ANYA) MARTINS
(1898-1985)

Anna (Anya) Martins was born 10 May 1898 on the Montanai Estate, near Eupatoria, Crimea. Her parents were Wilhelm Wilhelm Martins and Maria Dick. Anna graduated from medicine at the University of Simferopol, probably 1923 or 1924.

Anna migrated to Canada in 1926. She never married. She ran a psychiatric practice in Hamilton, Ontario, with her office right next to her home. It assumed that she likely took extra psychiatric training in Canada.

Anna died in 1985 in Hamilton, but was buried in Ruddel, Saskatchewan, where others of her family are buried.

Dr Anna (Anya) Martins as a young graduate in Russia

Dr Anna Martins about 1950, at age 60

Sources:
Durksen, Martin, *Die Krim was Unsere Heimat*, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, p 149
Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 1*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, Simferopol, pp 419-420, 429, 430
Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, Montanai Estate, pp 134-135, 346, 423

DR HERMANN HERMANN MEDER
(about 1872-1917)

Hermann Hermann Meder was born about 1872 in East Prussia. Specific education and medical training is not known. He worked as a physician in Odessa until he transferred to Sagradovka in September 1901. He had an urgent invitation to work in Chortitza, so he left Sagradovka in November 1905, working as the school doctor in Chortitza, and was on the staff of the *Fabrikkrankenhaus* (Factory Hospital). Since Sagradovka had no doctor, Dr Meder returned there in April 1913.

Dr Hermann Meder

On 4 November 1917 Dr Meder became seriously ill. A number of other physicians from the district were called in, but despite these consultations, his condition deteriorated, and in time it became obvious that he had the very worst kind of typhus. He himself had saved a number of patients with this disease, but this did not prevent his demise from the same condition, on 21 November 1917.

Dr Meder had worked in and was well loved and respected in Sagaradovka. During his last years practicing in the colony one of his pet concerns was that the district should have a hospital, which it obviously did not have at the time (at least until 1917).

The funeral, held in the Tiege Mennonite Church on 23 November, was very well attended despite terrible weather. The church building was filled to overflowing. In his sermon, Elder Franz Martens remarked that Dr Meder had all the necessary qualities of a "complete physician." People in the colony were forced to say "Sagradovka has had to give up its very much beloved and respected physician."

Dr Hermann Hermann Meder was 45 years of age when he died.. He was survived by his wife and three small children. Daughter Benita at age 7 was the eldest, and two sons were younger.

Sources:

Molotschnaer Flugblatt, News Report, 9 December 1917, p 5; 15 December 1917, p 6

Quiring, Walter and Helen Bartel. *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, Self Published, Saskatoon, , Saskatchewan, 1963, p 34

Vogt, Willi, *Mennonitische Ahnenforschung Chortitza Bilder: Gesudheitswesen*

DR PETER HEINRICH MIERAU
(1915-1999)

Peter Heinrich Mierau was born 21 October 1915 in Golyshevo, Ufa district. His parents were Heinrich Mierau and Helene Enns. The family had eight children: Johann (Hans) (6 April 1914), Peter (21 October 1915) and a twin Heinrich (21 October 1915, died 1918), Jakob (15 May 1917), Heinrich (1918, died soon after birth), Lena (29 November 1922), Heinrich (3 April 1924), Erna (1925, died 1937).

Peter was not a very healthy child, so his parents felt that he should emphasize studies. He completed the *Dorfschule* in Golyshevo, then took one year in the *Zentralschule* in the nearby Davlekanovo. Peter's family then moved to Ukraine, so he continued his studies in Ebental (also called Nikolayevka, Memrik Colony) and New York (Ignatyevo Colony). In the summer of 1934 Peter wrote the entrance examinations for the medical college at the University of Odessa, and was accepted; he graduated from medicine at the end of June 1939.

Peter married Rosa Schneider, a medical school class-mate, shortly after his graduation, on 1 July 1939. She was born 13 March 1917 in Mannheim, a village in the Odessa district; her parents were Jakob Schneider and Franziska Shiele. Several days later the newly-weds accepted a medical posting to a city south of Kiev. Peter was in this position for three years; he even did some surgical procedures during this time, such as amputation of a leg. During this time Rosa was admitted to hospital because of a congenital heart condition.

Peter and Rosa Mierau, 1939

With the German invasion of Russia in June of 1941, the region where Peter and Rosa lived was soon over-run. When the invasion turned into a retreat, they were able to head west by train on 9 December 1943, arriving at Konitz, West Prussia ten days later. The couple had one daughter, Irene, born 14 August 1944 in Kulm, Prussia. Peter was appointed physician in charge of a large refugee camp; he was subsequently drafted into the German Army, serving in various military hospitals.

After cessation of the hostilities, Peter became an American prisoner of war in May of 1945. He was finally released in October of 1947, then was admitted to the MCC refugee camp at Gronau, where he acted as the camp physician. Here, for the first time in many years, he was able to attend regular worship services. He was baptized on 19 September 1948 on the basis of his faith, and was accepted into the church. Unable to locate his family, he decided to migrate to Canada. Here he was greeted in Winnipeg by Enns relatives on 16 April 1949.

Rosa and daughter Irene in the meantime had been "repatriated" by the Russian forces, and deported to Siberia in October of 1945. Rosa died of a stroke 21 January 1951 in Siberia, although Peter did not hear about this until 1953.

Six months after his arrival in Canada Peter was diagnosed as having tuberculosis. Treatment was finally successful after a total of two-and-a-half years of hospitalization. In the early 1950s,

during the polio epidemic, Peter worked on wards at the Princess Elizabeth Hospital. In 1954 he wrote and passed the Canadian medical examinations.

In 1957 Peter completed three years of post-graduate studies in pathology, then beginning a 14-year appointment at the Misericordia Hospital in Winnipeg. In 1971 he was posted to the Victoria Hospital, then in 1974 became Director of Pathology at the Concordia General Hospital. Peter retired from his medical work at the end of December 1980.

Peter married Hilda Froese on 14 August 1954. She was the daughter of David Peter Froese and Katharina Neustadter. The couple had one daughter, Ursula, born 29 August 1956, in Winnipeg.

Ursula married Ernst Heinrich Wiebe on 28 May 1977. The couple now lives in Winnipeg, and has two children, Jonathan and Philip.

Hilda and Peter Mierau

Daughter Irene finally managed to immigrate to Canada from Russia in 1963 at the age of 18.. Peter had not seen her since she was a small baby. She married John George Sawatzky on 27 July 1968, and now also lives in Winnipeg. The couple has three children, Tamira, Cynthia and Robert.

Peter and Hilda were always actively involved in the work of the church. Peter, for example served as usher and recording secretary. On 13 January 1974 the couple was ordained as deacons by the Central Mennonite Brethren Church. Especially after his retirement Peter worked on his extensive stamp collection, but also enjoyed keeping their cottage in good condition.

Peter was very interested in his heritage. He was on the editorial committee and contributed a major article to "*Ufa: Die mennonitische Ansiedlung bei Ufa am Uralgebirge.*" Peter and Hilda participated in the *Ufimer Treffen* held in Vancouver on 18-19 July 1975. He was also editor of "Sojourners: The Story of the Enns Family." His mother, Helene, was an Enns.

Peter Heinrich Mierau had increasing difficulty mobilizing, and eventually died of a stroke and pneumonia on 31 December 1999 in Winnipeg. Hilda is still alive, and lives in an apartment in Winnipeg (March 2010).

Sources:

Der Bote, Frohes Wiedersehen nach 18 Jahren, 9 April 1963
Die Mennonitische Rundschau, Obituary, September 2000, p 27
Hein, Gerhard, editor, *Ufa: Die Mennonitische Ansiedlung bei Ufa am Uralgebirge, 1894-1938*, Winnipeg, Canada, 1975, Peter Mierau contributed a chapter to this book
Mennonite Brethren Herald, Obituary, 26 May 2000
Mierau, Hilda, family information
Mierau, Peter, editor, *Sojourners; The Story of the Enns Family*, Winnipeg, Canada, many pages
Wiebe (nee Mierau) Ursula, family history

DR GERHARD JAKOB NEUFELD
(1893-1938)

Gerhard Jakob Neufeld was born 13 January 1893 in Rosenort, Molotsachna. Gerhard was the third child, oldest of 5 sons of Jakob Neufeld and Sarah Neufeld (of Lichtenau). The family moved to the Ufa region, near the Ural Mountains, in 1898, with five children; more were, in time, born into the family. The children in descending order of age were: Sara, Lena, Gerhard, Jakob, Nicholas, Peter, Maria, Agnes, Greta, and Johann.

Near Ufa they occupied the Urta-Tau Estate, along the railway line, 10 km from Davlekanovo, near the Tjulenj River. Behind the Tjulenj was the "mountain" called Urta-Tau. They built a house, barn and additional outbuildings; two large gardens lay on either side of the driveway They were surrounded by Tatars and Baskirs. During the unsettled times the Neufelds were evicted from the estate; they built a log house, but were evicted from that as well

Father Jacob died 3 March 1924 in Davlekanovo, mother Sarah died in 1944/45 living in the home of a daughter.

Gerhard went to the local *Dorfschule*, for *Zentralschule* to Davlekanovo, then to Halbstadt for *Kommerzschule*. This was followed by two years at an Institute of Commerce in Moscow. He went to the University if Simferopol to study medicine; together with his younger brother Nicholas he graduated from medicine in 1923. He probably specialized in Ear, Nose and Throat Medicine in Simferopol.

Gerhard married Margarete Dueck of Neu-Halbstadt in 1921 or 1922; children were:

1. Alice - born 27 December 1923, involved in construction, married Richard Meyer, at least 1 child
2. Edith - born 1 March 1925, teacher for 35 years, mathematics
3. Rita (Margareta) - born 19 May 1927, accountant and bookkeeper, married a Mr Richter, at least 3 children
4. Ernst - born 21 December 1932, Professor of Mathematics at Ufa University

While his doctor brother Nicholas migrated to Canada, Gerhard chose to return to Davlekanovo, and set up practice there, where he was the regional doctor. Although a specialist, he saw all kinds of patients; he became the head of the local health clinic. He travelled around to the surrounding villages to attend to patients, and often travelled far to get medicines. He trained medical staff in Xray techniques.

During the time of the Stalin Purge Gerhard was at first spared. The family later discovered that he was attending the wife of the head NKVD person, who had blood poisoning, and that his services were needed. When she was cured, the authorities apprehended Gerhard.

In February 1938 Gerhard had just returned from a session of training to be a regional doctor, when he was arrested and jailed the night of 10-11 February 1938. The police were pounding at the door at 2 AM, and then also searched through the house before they took Gerhard. The family tried to visit him, tried to get some food through to him. He was said to have been moved to another prison. The official word was that he was imprisoned without permission to write.

For a long time Margarete sent food packages for Gerhard. Later the family discovered that he had been judged and found guilty on 13 April. Gerhard Jakob Neufeld was executed (shot) 7 June 1938.

After Stalin's death (March 1953) the family as well as Gerhard were "rehabilitated." He was declared innocent of all charges.

Wife Margarete died 11 December 1966 in Davlekanovo.

Alice and Edith and their children now live in Buxtehude, Germany.

Rita still lives in the old family home in Davlekanovo.

Ernst died of a massive head injury about 2007 when he suffered an accidental fall.

Daughter Edith got up during the night of 10-11 February 1988 and wrote a poem in honour of her father, exactly 50 years after his arrest

Eine Erinnerung

Es sind jetzt 50 Jahre vergangen,
Und doch ist's mir, ob's gestern war,
Die schreckliche Nacht, der grauende Morgen,
erfuellen mich heut' noch mit Kummer und Sorge.

Die Schurken, als sie die Haussuchung machten,
uns alle im Hause so strenge bewachten...
Dann nahmen sie unseren Papa mit fort.
Fuer immer. Sein Grab ist an fremden Ort

Wofuer? Was hatte er ihnen Schlechtes gemacht?
Gearbeitet nur, von Frueh bis zur Nacht.
Noch heute gedenken die Leute nur dankend seiner,
vom Tyranen, jedoch, sprach lange Keiner

Doch jetzt wird viel darueber geschrieben,
das der Schurke es dann zu arg getrieben.
Und Alle, die von ihm repressiert
sind nach ihrem tragischem Tode jetzt rehabilitiert.

Wir wussten natuerlich, dass sie unschuldig waren,
und doch ist es gut, dass es auch andre erfahren,
Fuer uns ist's desto schwerer zu wissen, dass sie
Und wir alle unnoetig gelitten. Das vergisst man jetzt nie.

Wir waren damals noch klein, der Schmerz sehr gross.
Uns Kindern, jedoch, blieb Muetterchen's Schoss.
Sie hat aus uns ehrliche Menschen gemacht,
Und immer mit uns an Papa gedacht.

Gedacht und gehofft, er kommt noch zurueck,
Es blueht noch mal auf, das zerschlagene Glueck.
Doch Hoffnung musste zu Schanden werden,
es gab kein Wiedersehen mehr hier auf Erden

Und 21 Jahre und 2 Monate ist es jetzt her,
da hatten wir auch kein Muetterchen mehr.*
Sie ruht jetzt aus von Kummer und Sorgen
und ist beim Himmlischen Vater geborgen.

Doch uns Kinder bleibt die Erinnerung
an unsere lieben Eltern zurueck,
Das ist ein grosses und sehr teures Glueck.
Das wollen wir schaetzen, und danach streben
Ehrlich, wie Vater und Mutter zu leben.

*Mother Margarete Neufeld died 11 December 1966

A Memory
(Translated by Helmut Huebert, 2010)

Fifty years have now passed,
But to me it seems like just yesterday,
That terrible night, the greying dawn
even today fill me with anguish and pain.

Those scoundrels, as they searched our house
they carefully guarded us all in our home...
Then they took our father away.
Forever. His grave is in some unknown place.

Why? What had he done to harm them?
He only worked, from early morning and on into the night.
Even today people think of him with thanks.
The tyrant, however, was not mentioned for a long time.

But now much is written about it,
That the scoundrel then took it too far.
All those who were arrested by him,
after their tragic deaths, are now declared rehabilitated.

Of course we knew they were innocent.
Yet it is good that others also know this,

For us it is harder to know, that we
All suffered without reason. That, one never forgets.

At the time we were small, but the hurt very large,
For us children, however, remained the mother's lap,
She has raised us to be honest people
And always reminded us of Papa

Thought and hoped, he will come back,
It bloomed, that battered hope.
But hope was only to be shattered again,
There was to be no meeting again on this earth.

It is now twenty one years and two months
That we also had mother no more.
She now rests from the anguish and pain
And is safe with the heavenly father.

But with us children the memory of our dear parents remains,
That is one great and valuable blessing
We value it, and will strive
To live honestly, like our father and mother

Sources:

Neufeld Family History, including letters from Gerhard's three daughters

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, second edition, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 227, 449

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia.* Vol 1, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 420, 426, 429, 432

Neufeld, N J in *Ufa: Die mennonitische Ansiedlung bei Ufa am Uralgebirge*, editor Gerhard Hein, Winnipeg, Canada, 1975, pp 73-80

Neufeld, N J, in *Die Krim War Unsere Heimat*, editor Martin Durksen, Christian Press, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, pp 148-150

Toews, A A, *Mennonitische Maertyrer, Band 2*, self published, North Clearbrook, British Columbia, 1954, pp 42, 43

Gerhard J Neufeld, student

Gerhard Neufeld,
medical student
in 1920

Dr Gerhard Neufeld

Wife Margarete, son Ernst and Gerhard Neufeld
in 1934

DR NICHOLAS JAKOB NEUFELD
(1897-1977)

Nicholas Jakob Neufeld was born 2 June 1897 in Rosenort, Molotschna. His parents were Jakob Neufeld and Sarah Neufeld (who was from Lichtenau). Nicholas was the fifth of ten children. The family moved to the Ufa Region, near the Ural Mountains, in 1898, with five children. Nicholas was one year old at the time. The ten children in descending order by age were: Sara, Lena, Gerhard, Jakob, Nicholas, Peter, Maria, Agnes, Greta and Johann.

The family occupied the Urta-Tau Estate, along the railway line, 10km from Davlekanovo, near the Tjulenj River. Behind the Tjulenj was the "mountain" called Urta Tau. They built a house, barn and additional outbuildings; two large gardens lay on either side of the driveway. They were surrounded by Tatars and Baskirs. During the unsettled times they were evicted from the estate. They built a log house, but were evicted from that as well.

Father Jakob died 3 March 1924 in Davlekanovo, mother Sarah died in 1944/45 living in a daughter's home.

Nicholas went to the local *Dorfschule*, then *Zentralschule* in Davlekanovo. He went to medical school at the University of Simferopol in1918, graduating in May of1923. Older brother Gerhard also studied medicine in Simferopol at the same time, graduating the same year.

Nicholas married Susanna Loewen 25 August 1923 in Davlekanovo. She was the daughter of Elder Daniel J Loewen and Anna J Kaethler of Davlekanovo. Susanna was a teacher in Margenau, Molotschna in 1920.

The couple had four children:

Nick - born 17 June 1924

John - born 18 July 1926, married Lena Janzen, daughter of H H Janzen, a doctor, eventually Obstetrics and Gynaecology specialist

Margaret - born 7 July 1928, married Cornelius Derksen, a doctor, who for a time worked together with father-in-law in the same office

Gerhard Ernst - born 12 May 1932, married Martha Dick

September 1924 Nicholas and Susanna immigrated to Canada. In May 1926 Nicholas passed his medical exams in Manitoba. He practiced in Lowe Farm and Altona, then moved to Winnipeg in 1929. Nicholas passed the LMCC exams in 1931, and did post-graduate study in surgery in Leipzig, Germany, and Innsbruck, Austria, from1935 to1936.

Nicholas and Susanna joined the South-End/Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church, and were active life-long members; he served on many committees of the church. Susanna was very active in various programs for women. He was very interested, both in the church context, and in the school program of Manitoba, to preserve the use of the German language.

Nicholas was co-founder, in 1929, of the Concordia Society; some of the others were Jacob J Schulz and Jakob Kroeker. This society eventually was instrumental in the founding of Concordia Hospital in 1931, and the initiation of the Concordia prepaid medical scheme He was a member of the Contract System for its entire duration 1933-1958. Nicholas was leading member of the Concordia Hospital medical staff, from the beginning of the function of the hospital until his retirement in 1977. He was a medical consultant for the Bethania Personal Care Home, both when

it was initially in Steinbach, and when it moved to Winnipeg.

He was co-founder of the Crosstown Credit Union and its president from 1944 until1960. His account number was No 1.

Interested in his own Mennonite heritage, Nicholas contributed to various publications. He was on the editorial committee of *Ufa: Die mennonitische Ansiedlung bei Ufa am Uralgebirge*, and wrote an article about his own home region. He was active in the *Ufimer Treffen* held in Vancouver 18-19 July 1975, and chaired at least one of the sessions. Nicholas also described his student days at Simferopol in the Crimea in "*Die Krim war unsere Heimat*" edited by Martin Durksen.

Nicholas retired from active practice in 1973.

Nicholas Jakob Neufeld died 31 October 1977 in Winnipeg

Susanna Neufeld died 24 May 1992, also in Winnipeg

Sources:

Die Mennonitische Rundsachau

Von der Reise 30 July 1958

Goldene Hochzeit 17 October 1973

Dueck, Abe J, *Concordia Hospital 1928 - 1978*, Christian Press, Winnipeg, 1978, many pages

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 1*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2006, pp 420, 426, 429, 431

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*, Second Edition, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg Canada, 2008, pp 227, 449

Mennonite Brethren Herald

Obituary 6 January 1978, p 23

Neufeld Family History

Neufeld, N J, in *Ufa: Die mennonitische Ansiedlung bei Ufa am Uralgebirge*, editor Gerhard Hein, Winnipeg, Canada, 1975, pp 73-80

Neufeld, N J, in *Die Krim war unsere Heimat*, editor Martin Durksen, Christian Press, Winnipeg, Canada, 1977, pp 148-150

Warkentin, A and Gingerich, Melvin *Who's Who Among The Mennonites*, North Newton. Kansas, 1943. pp 181-182

DR PETER PETERS
(1893-1938)

Peter Peters was born 3 November 1893, likely in Chortitza, Chortiza. His parents were Paul Peters and Katharina Welk. He graduated from medicine at the University of Odessa, then practiced medicine in Ekaterinoslav and Gruenfeld.

Peter married Maria Jakob Esau on 12 June 1916 in Ekaterinoslav. She was the daughter of ophthalmologist Jakob Esau and Susanna Heese. The couple had two children.

Peter was arrested and likely executed in 1938

Wife Maria eventually escaped to Canada, and died in Windsor, Ontario, on 23 May 1974.

Sources:

Enns, J J Notes

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, pp 102, 118, 331-332

DR DIETRICH DIETRICH REMPEL

Dietrich Dietrich Rempel was from Gnadenfeld, and was likely born about 1890. His father was Dietrich Rempel.

Dietrich was a graduate of the medical school at Dorpat University in 1914. Dorpat was the national university of Estonia, and during that time had instruction in both German and Russian. It was known especially for training in administration and health care systems.

For one year after graduation Dietrich was an assistant at the surgical clinic of Professor Szoege, probably at Dorpat University.

Dietrich then served for three years at the front during World War I.

In June of 1918 Dietrich advertised that he was looking for a position as a physician.

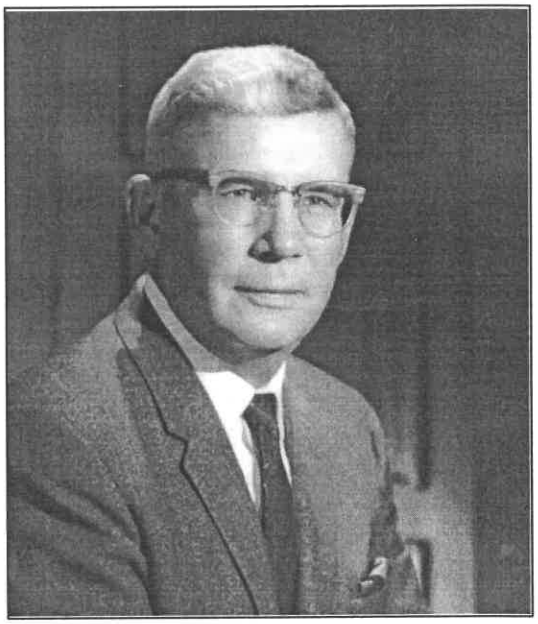
It is possible that two women from Gnadenfeld, Agatha Rempel and Maria Rempel, both of whom graduated from medicine in Simferopol in 1920, were his relatives, even his sisters.

Sources:

Advertising in *Volksfreund*, 8 June 1918, p 8

Nicholas Neufeld, medical student in 1920

Nicholas and Susanna Neufeld



Dr Nicholas J Neufeld

DR WILHELM RAKKO
(1912-2006)

Wilhelm Rakko was born 23 February 1912 in Waldheim, Molotschna. His parents were Louis Rakko and Maria Schartner. He attended the *Dorfschule* in Waldheim, and *Zentralschule* in Halbstadt. It was said that he obtained education as *Feldscher* in Halbstadt, although it is more likely to have been in Ekaterinoslav. In the more difficult Soviet times Wilhelm practiced his profession in various places in Ukraine.

Wilhelm married Anna Dueck on 20 March 1933. She was a trained midwife. They had two children, Elfriede (born in latter part of 1933) and Arnold, born April 1940. Through special friends Wilhelm was able to obtain funds so he could obtain his degree in medicine at the University of Odessa. No sooner had he completed his studies, when he was appointed to various positions by the government.

The German invasion of Russia during World War II brought the usual confusion, but when the German forces retreated, the Rakko family was among those who finally made it to Germany. Having arrived they were granted German citizenship, and Wilhelm was drafted into the army as a physician. After the collapse of Germany, Wilhelm was an American prisoner of war for two and a half years. There was a chance to migrate to Canada, but then, through the Mennonite Central Committee, there was a request that he accept a position as physician in the newly established settlement of Neuland in the Paraguayan Chaco. So it was that the Rakko family joined the thousands of others from Russia to go to Paraguay in 1948

Wilhelm Rakko

The original planned appointment of five years stretched out to 30, Wilhelm as doctor, Anna as midwife and head nurse of the hospital. With his leadership and suggestions the first hospital was built, then dedicated in 1951. Since they lacked trained personnel, Wilhelm taught many nursing classes throughout the years. Also, through his contact Dr. Gerhard Dollinger was recruited for work in the Fernheim hospital. They had been close friends since the prisoner-of-war days.

In 1955 the Rakkos were baptized and joined the Mennonite Church. They were very active in the Neu-Halbstadt Mennonite congregation.

When Wilhelm retired, presumably about 1978, Wilhelm and Anna moved to Brazil, where daughter Elfriede and son Arnold and their families lived. They settled down in Curitiba, Parana, in a nice house in Boqueirao. No sooner were they settled in when they played an active role in the Boqueirao Mennonite Church.

Unfortunately son Arnold died in 1989. Anna died in 1996. In 1997 Wilhelm moved to a seniors' home, Bethesda, then after an operation moved in with his daughter Elfriede. Eventually nursing home care was required. Wilhelm Rakko died of pneumonia in Sao Jose dos Pinhais Hospital in Curitiba, on 15 January 2006.

Sources:
Obituary, Dr Wilhelm Rakko, *Bibel und Pflug*, March 2006, p 10
Obituary, Anna Rakko (nee Dueck), *Der Bote*, 13 Nov 1996, p 6

DR PETER JAKOB SAWATZKY
(1886-1962)

Peter Jakob Sawataky was born 14 June 1886 in Wiesenfeld, Pavlograd District, Province of Ekaterinoslav. He was the youngest of 16 children of Jakob J Sawatzky and Maria Huebert. He was an especially lively and clever boy. His schooling began in 1893, with teacher Johann Pauls, then from 1899 on it was Adolf Reimer. He was able to go right into the second class at the Halbstadt *Zentralschule.* Upon completion of that school he took two years of teacher training. Peter obtained a teaching position near Gulyaipole, then, after that, with German Baptists in Karkhov Province.

As a youth Peter accepted the Lord as his Saviour; he was baptized 23 March 1904, and joined the Mennonite Brethren Church in Einlage, Chotitza Colony. In villages where he taught, he was on occasion asked to preach. In time, however, he came to the conclusion that this was not his particular avocation. In the summer of 1903 Gerhard D Duerksen gave some seminars in Wiesenfeld to prepare students for entry into higher level teacher training institutions. Duerksen himself was studying medicine at the University of Odessa. Despite being discouraged by his family, Peter decided to follow this path. First he studied at, and graduated from, the eight-class Classical *Gymnasium* in Ekaterinoslav. Here he lived very frugally, since his financial resources were limited. From there he went to study medicine at the New Russian University of Odessa, beginning in 1908 During his time of study World War I broke out, so that he started working in a military hospital even before he had finished his studies.

The Cornelius Jakob Reimer family. Margaretha Reimer back row second from the right

Peter married Margaretha Reimer on 29 June 1916. She was born 3 December 1887 in Wiesenfeld. She was the daughter of the well-known teacher, Cornelius Jakob Reimer of Wiesenfeld and Katharina Philipp Isaak of Blumenort, Molotschna. She was the seventh of nine children, the youngest sibling being Cornelius C Reimer who eventually reached Sardis, BC. As honeymoon the new couple travelled to the Bethania Mental Hospital near Einlage, where Peter covered emergency calls for a time. Then it was back to Odessa to work at the military hospital and to complete his medical studies. His wife Margaretha completed her training as nurse, then worked as secretary in the Red Cross office in Odessa. Peter completed his studies in the autumn of 1918.

With Revolution and Civil War raging, the Sawatzkys had a difficult time getting to Peter's home. Via a very stormy voyage across the Black Sea to Sevastopol, then north by train, they at last reached Wiesenfeld. A year later they moved south to Karassan in the Crimea, where Peter obtained

a medical position. It took steady nerves and a trusting faith in God to set up a practice under such circumstances. During the time of the White Army occupation Peter was transferred to Dshankoy to battle typhus, which had broken out in the military and in the civilian population. He himself contracted the disease, and nearly died. Many people prayed for him.

After the epidemic of typhus Peter returned to Karassan, where he worked diligently until 1923. At that time a new supervisor took over the region who was not friendly to the pious Mennonite doctor, so they left Karassan to settle in a Lutheran district at Naimann. Here the Sawatzkys had a fairly good house and he worked in a small hospital. At first the population did not trust the new doctor and only came to see him with serious emergencies. In time Peter's friendly manner, conscientious practice and efficient scheduling brought him more patients than he could handle. The surrounding Tatars and even Muslim women allowed him to examine them.

The wider Sawatzky family had to flee from their traditional home in Wiesenfeld to Gnadenfeld in the Molotschna. A number of them had also migrated to North America and pointed out that it was easy for Christian physicians to find employment there. Yet the Peter Sawatzky family delayed until it was too late.

Peter and Margaretha had two children, Woldemar and Agnes. Woldemar was born 22 July 1920 in Karassan. When the children reached high-school age the family moved to the city of Theodosia, where the appropriate educational institutions were available. From there son Woldemar went to Odessa to pursue medical studies. There was no lack of work, but there was an increasing anti-German sentiment and also jealousy of colleagues, who were looking for opportunity to turn Peter in. 1936 became 1937.

On the night of 18 November 1937 black NKVD automobiles sped through the villages and cities of the Crimea, and the next morning many of the men were missing. Peter was among those arrested and imprisoned. His wife Margaretha tried everything to have him freed. First there was one year of interrogation, which usually meant severe torture. Then he was sentenced to ten years in exile. Margaretha was able to visit him at his place of exile on one occasion. It was a difficult journey, and she had to tramp for hours through swampy forest till she finally reached the concentration camp. She found him to be suffering, to be very thin and homesick, but willing to submit to the will of God. After the visit she received a few more letters from him. Somewhat later he complained of being sick, but he was still willing to submit to the will of God. Even at his place of exile he helped people, both physically and spiritually, especially those who were dying.

Peter was released from exile and returned to his family in 1946. With renewed courage, and putting aside the difficulties of the past, Peter resumed his practice of medicine. His love for, and meticulous care of patients were well appreciated. In 1956 Peter retired; he and his wife Margaret moved Karaganda, Kazakhstan, where their two children lived. But even in retirement he could not stand by when he could help the suffering.

Starting in 1950 Peter had suffered from anemia, which did not seem to respond to the usual treatment. His strength gradually failed. From January 1962 on he spent considerable time in bed, finding it increasingly difficult to get up without help. For the last two or three weeks he became increasingly weak. He spent much time in prayer, and asked for two of his favourite hymns to be sung. *Nim Jesu Meine Haende* and *Jesus, Heiland Meiner Seele*. Two hours later Peter Jakob Sawatzky closed his eyes and died on 22 November 1962 .

Son Woldemar married Maria Froese. He did complete his medical studies and became a

physician. His sister Agnes was also married and became a teacher. Both couples lived in Karaganda, and as mentioned, were in time joined by their parents. Woldemar and Maria migrated to Germany 18 August 1992. The specific fate of the other members of the family is not known, but it is presumed that Margaretha Sawatzky died in Karaganda some time after 1962.

Sources

Die Mennonitische Rundschau, Obituary of Peter Jakob Sawatzky sent in by G J Reimer of Kingsville Ontario and Jakob C Reimer of Clearbrook BC, published 26 June 1963, p 6

Martens, Katherine, translator and editor of *They Came from Wiesenfeld Ukraine to Canada: Family Stories*, Winnipeg, Canada, 2005, pp 153, 161-163

Toews, A A *Mennonitische Maertyrer Band 2*, self published, North Clearbrook, British Columbia, 1954, pp 44-47

DR WOLDEMAR PETER SAWATZKY

Woldemar Peter Sawatzky was born 22 July 1920 in Karassan, Crimea. His parents were Dr Peter Jakob Sawatzky and Margaretha Reimer. His father was practicing medicine in various places in the Crimea. When Woldemar and his sister Agnes reached high-school age, the parents moved to a larger city, Theodosia, where appropriate educational opportunities were available. From there Woldemar went to the University of Odessa to pursue medical studies.

In the meantime father Peter was arrested 18 November 1937, and was not released until 1946. In 1956 Peter retired from medical practice and moved Karaganda in Kazakhstan, where the two children lived.

Son Woldemar married Maria Froese. He completed his medical studies and apparently practiced in Karaganda. Sister Agnes was also married, and became a teacher.

Woldemar and Maria migrated to Germany 18 August 1992.

BERNHARD PAUL SCHELLENBERG
ASSISTANT MEDICAL OFFICER
(FELDSCHER)
(1840-1888)

Bernhard Schellenberg and family

Bernhard Paul Schellenberg was born 2 February 1840 in Osterwick, Chortitza Colony. His parents were Paul Bernhard Schellenberg born 2 October 1797 in Einlage, and Maria J Pauls born 15 June 1797 in the Chortitza Colony. Paul and Maria had 12 children, of whom Bernhard was the last. At least the youngest three were born in Osterwick, so the couple must have lived there certainly from 1834 onward.

Bernhard Paul Schellenberg

Bernhard probably had his early schooling in Osterwick. In time he studied at the Jewish Hospital in Nagartav in Kherson Province, obtaining the degree of assistant medical officer (Feldscher) in 1862. He returned home to the Chortitza Colony, and worked with great success, as the first "doctor" of the colony, centred in the village Chortitza.

Bernhard married Katharina D Epp on 14 July 1862 in Chortitza. She was born on 15 October 1839 in Chortitza, and was the daughter of David David Epp and Helena Thiessen. Bernhard and Katharina had nine children, of whom only five survived early childhood: Helena (born 13 September 1863), Bernhard (born 23 September 1865), Katharina (born 20 February 1871), Anna (born 17 March 1876) and Maria (born 17 March 1876 - twin). Bernhard was the brother-in-law of Jakob Epp.

While Bernhard's studies were not strictly speaking university medical courses, they did qualify him to a much greater degree than anyone else in the colony. Bernhard was consulted in cases involving infected eyes, severe fevers, blood poisoning, and broken bones. His fame as a herbalist was widespread. Most of his supplies for salves and ointments were collected on an abutment on the right side of the Dniepr River, often called *Schweinkopf* , because its shape reminded people of the head of a pig. Emphasis of Bernhard's medical practice was on "natural" or manipulative cures. Blood-letting was one of his favourite treatments.

Bernhard Paul Schellenberg retired from practice in 1884, at the age of 44. He died on 13 February 1888 in Chortitza, at the age of 48. Presumably he had a serious underlying medical condition which curtailed his work and resulted in his early retirement and death.

Sources:
Die Mennonitische Rundschau, News Item, 28 March 1888, p 1
Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, pp 52, 60
Toews, John B, Childbirth, Disease and Death Among the Mennonites in Nineteenth-Century Russia, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 60 (1986) pp 453-454, 456

DR WILHELM STIEDA

Bethania Mental Hospital began functioning in 1911. One of the criteria for medical appointment was that the doctors would work in conjunction with and adhere to the principles of the Mennonite faith. Dr Wilhelm Stieda of Riga was the first appointee as chief of the medical staff and presumably met these criteria. His reports regarding the medical status of Bethania for 1912 and 1913 certainly bear this out.

Dr Isaak Thiessen came on staff at Bethania as an assistant to Dr Stieda in 1913, and from 1914 on seemed to be Chief-of-Staff. It is quite probable that Dr Stieda had agreed to help Bethania temporarily, until Dr Thiessen came back from his training in Germany.

Dr Stieda was drafted into the military as an officer when World War I broke out.

He was considered to be a true doctor, a nice person and a good teacher.

Sources:
Klassen, Isaak P, Notes
Mennonitisches Jahrbuch
Medizinischer Bericht (Bethania), Dr Wilhelm Stieda, 1912, pp 93-106
Medizinischer Bericht (Bethania), Dr Wilhelm Stieda, 1913, pp 154-162

DR ALFRED PETER STOESZ
(1899-1955)

Alfred Peter Stoesz was born 18 March 1899 in the village of Alexandertal of the Alt Samara Mennonite Colony. His father was Peter Stoesz, a government official and regional secretary of the Alexandertal area. His mother Auguste Claassen was born 13 March 1863 in Heubuden, Grossen Werder, Prussia; she was married four times. She first married Abraham Claassen, also of Heubuden, on 16 July 1882. The couple moved to Liebental, then Berdyansk in South Russia. One of the three children of this first marriage was Rudolf, who became a physician, and later practiced in Canada. Her second marriage was to Jacob Stoesz, with whom she had one son, Jacob. Her third marriage was to Peter Stoesz. The couple had five children, all born in Alt Samara; the third child was Alfred Peter Stoesz. Alfred's father died in 1908. Auguste married again, to Jakob Wieler, in 1915. Auguste fled west in 1922, and died just after crossing the border into Poland. She is said to have died of liver cancer, although it was more likely hepatitis. The maiden name of Auguste is given as Claassen, which is also the family name of her first husband.

Auguste and Peter Stoesz, parents of Alfred Peter Stoesz

As a child, Alfred apparently was the favourite of his father. Father Peter Stoesz suffered heavy financial losses towards the end of his life, so it was feared that there would not be enough money for schooling. Somehow, however, Alfred was able to complete his medical training. By 1930 he had become an accomplished physician in Saratov.

Lesbian patient and Alfred

Alfred had a Russian wife, and a number of children, of which at least one was a son.

In letters written to relatives in 1930, Alfred expressed some interest in migrating to the United States. He felt, however, that he did not have the money that would have been required to finance a year or two of study until he would know English well enough to pass the medical examinations. From 1931-1936 Alfred was in the Soviet Army.

It is not certain exactly when, but in his career he spent considerable time in research and writing scientific papers. He was particularly interested in brain injuries; his doctoral thesis was about brain concussions. He wrote 40 scientific papers, the most valuable ones being about concussions. He was also involved in the psychiatric management of lesbians. In 1925 he reported a cure of a lesbian who had originally taken the male name of Aleksandr Pavlovich Apparently Alfred was also a good lecturer; he could explain things well. He was Chair of the Department of Nervous Diseases Medical Academy at the Saratov University Hospital.

Throughout the Great Patriotic War (World War II) he worked as a medical consultant to military hospitals, as well as continuing his other work.

In 1942 Alfred was transferred to Alma Ata in Kazakhstan; it is suspected that this transfer may not have been voluntary. Here he worked at the Alma Ata State Medical Institute (W M Molotov Medical Institute). He was head of the psychiatric department from 1947-1955. He did attend a conference in Moscow in 1951 organized specifically for the leadership of the Soviet psychiatric profession. This did show that he was no longer suffering under the label of being a member of an undesirable group. Stoesz advocated Pavlov's teachings, so he would have been a welcomed participant in the "Pavlov Session" in Moscow which was meant to impose this theory on the profession. His participation in both the open and the closed sessions may have indicated that he was a trusted member of the Communist Party.

Dr A P Stoesz

Alfred Peter Stoesz died 18 November 1955 after a long and severe illness. Nothing further is known about his wife and children.

Sources:

Fast, Naemi, Stoesz family information
Official Obituary, *S S Corsakov Journal of Neuropathology and Psychiatry*, vol 56, no 2, 1956
Stoesz, A D, *A Stoesz Genealogy 1731-1972*, many pages, especially pp 23-27
Stoesz family history and information, particular help of Archivist, Conrad Stoesz
Unruh, Benjamin Heinrich, *Die niederlaendisch-niederdeutsche Hintergruende der mennonitischen Ostwanderungen*, selbstverlag 1955, p 390.

DR ERICH ALEXANDER TAVONIUS
[1872 - 1927]

Chief-of-Staff of Muntau Hospital
One of the founders of *Morija* Deaconess Home

Erich Alexander Tavonius was the third of five children of Alexander and Alexandra [Schulinus] Tavonius. He was born on 3 October 1872 in a small fortification Psebaj in the Kuban region of Russia. His father was Swedish, a doctor, serving in a Russian military outpost. By the time Erich reached school age his father had been posted to Gluchow, Province Tchernigov, where he attended the first two years of *gymnasium*. He received a certificate of excellence, both for his studies and his behaviour.

When Erich was ten his father died, at the age of 44, leaving mother Alexandra with five children, four boys and one girl. The family moved to Alexandra's former home, Dorpat [now Tartu, in Estonia], near Koenigsberg, in East Prussia. Here Erich attended the Dorpat *Gymnasium,* and again distinguished himself for diligence and talent. A scholarship of 100 rubles per year for four years enabled him to go to the University of Dorpat, where he entered the medical faculty. Erich was recognized as a serious, ambitious student. He never missed classes, and thanks to his talent and excellent memory, he knew the subject matter as soon as the professor had completed the last lecture. In the summer holidays, to help their mother, Erich and his older brother Alexander worked as tutors in various aristocratic homes in the Baltic provinces.

Dr. Erich A. Tavonius [1872 - 1927]

Erich graduated from the university in 1895 with highest honours. He obtained an appointment at a hospital in Kremenchug, province of Poltava, where he worked under the supervision of a skillful surgeon, Dr. Bogajewsky. After that he served a brief time on the estate of Prince Dimitri Konstantinovitch, near Mirgorod, a posting he soon traded for a job at Novo-Wassiljewka, Berdyansk area, where he stayed until 1900. When the position of Chief-of-Staff of the Muntau Hospital and Regional Medical Officer became available he, upon the recommendations of his friends Jakob Sudermann and David Dick, applied for and was given the post.

In 1900, the year of his arrival in the region, he married Margarethe Baumann, daughter of a pastor from Prischib, the German village across the Molochnaya River from Halbstadt.

Only a brief summary of his 27 years at the Muntau Hospital can be given. Initially the hospital was small, with limited facilities. The young unknown physician, in a new setting, needed to orient himself and earn the trust of the constituency. Erich Tavonius soon achieved this trust.

The Muntau Hospital published annual reports which were sometimes printed in the Mennonite periodicals. The 1902 statistics showed that it was a very active hospital. In all there

had been 191 patients using 3,239 patient days. A total of 95 operations were done, of which 80 were major, 15 minor surgery. Of these operations, 72 were done with chloroform general anaesthesia, 12 with local, the rest without anaesthesia. There was resection of tumour in 20 operations, resection or scraping of bone in 12, seven hernia repairs, five major amputations and even four cataract removals. Tavonius probably took care of most of the admissions to hospital, and certainly did all the operations.

Margarethe and Erich Tavonius

Franz K Wall, founder and administrator of the Muntau Hospital, died in 1904. He was replaced by his wife Elisabeth and family; son Franz Wall Jr was in time the principal administrator. Several months after Wall's death terrible tragedy struck in Prischib. In a robbery the parents and sister of Margarethe Tavonius, Pastor Baumann, his wife and daughter were killed. Both Erich and Margarethe were shattered, to the extent that they took a prolonged leave to recuperate in Simferopol, Crimea. Erich decided never to return to the region again, as a matter of fact to give up surgery entirely. The family returned to Erich's home in the Baltic region.. When he had recovered to some extent he went to the University of Koenigsberg, where he studied "Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat" with the intention of going out as a missionary doctor. When, however, the efforts to go to foreign fields were not successful, and the position in Muntau was still vacant, he allowed himself to be persuaded to return. Tavonius came back in the spring of 1906, and resumed his work with vigour.

The total number of patients grew, and the medical facilities were soon too small. The hospital was remodelled and enlarged, to have a 60 bed capacity. The small nursing school of the hospital was also expanded by the establishment of *Morija* Deaconess Home, which was dedicated in 1910. Dr. Tavonius was one of the founders of this home, and then was heavily involved in the work of teaching the students. When *Morija* was modified to be a medical institute in the 1920s he continued to carry much of the work load.

When World War I broke out, Tavonius was mobilized, being called to serve in the spring of 1915. He served on the front as the administrator of a reserve field hospital. He suffered a riding accident, and having a serious injury, was admitted to the military hospital in Zarskoye-Sselo. After his recovery he was posted to a hospital in Aschabad, east of the Caspian Sea, where he served until he was discharged in the summer of 1918. The surgery he had practised in his military stint was helpful, but the heat had not been good for him. He had some heart trouble in 1905; this combined with his serious injury and the heat, caused his health to deteriorate.

Erich came back to Muntau in August 1918 and courageously began his work again. The vicissitudes of the Russian Civil War, epidemics and famine did not leave him unscathed. In 1920 he himself contracted typhus, but "Thanks to God's Grace" recovered, although the sequels of a weakened heart and a nervous tremor remained. He was able to continue his work in several months, while still a partial invalid. Despite his disability the work load increased dramatically over the next few years. He took only short holidays, although in the last years these came more frequently, since his fatigue due to chronic insomnia almost overpowered him.

In 1922 Tavonius wrote a letter enquiring of an A. A. Friesen about the medical conditions requiring special attention before people could migrate to Canada, presumably so he could help them. He also made a personal enquiry about the possibility of his own migration to that country.

In July of 1923 he wrote a letter to *Die Mennonitische Rundschau* thanking the American Brethren for food packages that had arrived. He also thanked for medical supplies – many patients were arriving at the hospital, some on foot, others riding on cows or horses. There were operations

every day; the nurses were working hard. It was expected that the salaries for hospital personnel would be paid from the proceeds of a crop off the 20 dessiatines of land the hospital owned. Tavonius hoped that the supplies of chloroform, ether and iodine would not run out!

Also in 1923 an influenza epidemic included Tavonius among its victims. He recovered, but the disease further weakened his heart. Since the work itself seemed to go well in 1926 he took a holiday in the Caucasus to regain his strength. Unfortunately it was not successful, so he planned another holiday for Germany, where he hoped to undergo further treatment, combined with some additional study he had arranged in Zwickau. He was filled with hopes and plans for the future.

But his duty called Tavonius to Melitopol, and with the unpredictable spring weather he caught a cold. He finally arrived home on Good Friday,1927, an ill man. He improved somewhat, the fever subsiding by Easter Monday. The following day, however, he had a relapse, likely a heart attack, and this, together with the fever, was too much. Dr Erich Alexander Tavonius died on Friday, 29 April1927.

Even right to the end Tavonius was dedicated to his work. On 22 January 1927 he and Dr Isaak Thiessen wrote a letter to *Die Mennonitische Rundschau* describing the nursing school that still functioned, inviting young ladies to register. There was also a well thought out plea to move the Bethania Psychiatric Hospital to the Halbstadt region. The letter was published 8 June 1927, more than a month after Tavonius' death.

In his personal life Erich had accepted Christ as his saviour in the first years of his activities in the Molotschna. It was his desire to serve the Lord with his life. His faith was foundation for difficult times, and helped him to fulfill his very responsible position. He was active in the life of the Molotschna Colony, often contributing to various charities, and of course helping develop the medical programs and facilities. It is likely, however, that he never actually joined a Mennonite church, possibly fellowshipping in the German churches of the Prischib area.

Erich and Margarethe had four children, all daughters:

1. Ingeborg - became Xray technician, worked in Crimea, died in Yalta 1969
2. Karin - became a physician, for a few years worked in the Muntau Hospital, eventually to Germany, lived in the Black Forest
3. Sigried - elementary school teacher, twice exiled to Siberia, died in Moscow 1968
4. Erika - became a physician, on the Great Trek, refugee to Germany, son Rudolf and four foster daughters, eventually to Paraguay in 1948, worked in Filadelfia, to Canada, then California for 27 years, retired to Canada 1985, died 2006 in Vineland, Canada

Dr Tavonius with his four daughters. Family pet dog, Muschka, under the table

The murder of Margarethe's parents and sister, while having a serious effect on Erich, undoubtedly was even harder on Margarethe. After the birth of the second child, Karin, she had what was most likely post-partum depression. This was, at least in part, the reason for their extended leave from the hospital in 1904-1905. Margarethe improved for a time, but after the birth of the fourth child, Erika, in 1908, her mental instability became more chronic. She was taken to Mitau [now Jelgava, Latvia], where she was admitted to the mental hospital Guentershof. With the help of his mother and sister, Erich raised the four

daughters, and despite difficulties, they turned out well. Escaping from Russia, Margarethe died in the Warthegau region of Poland in 1942.

The funeral of Dr Erich Tavonius was held on 3 May 1927. Thousands of people came from far and wide. Before the body was taken to the Halbstadt Mennonite Church, Minister Heinrich Harder preached a sermon on the grounds of the Muntau Hospital, text being "Now, how will I be comforted?" In the church, beginning at 10 AM, visitors were allowed one last look at their beloved and much appreciated doctor. At 2 PM the funeral began on the church yard, there being too many mourners to have the service in the church building. Pastor Hahn of Hochstaedt spoke on the text "I have fought the good fight"[2 Timothy 4:7], followed by Elder A. Klassen of Halbstadt, who spoke on "Blessed are the dead...their deeds will follow them" [Revelation 14:13], then Pastor Theo Kludt with text "Blessed by God, the Father of your Lord, Jesus Christ." There were words from a representative of the *Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheiten* [KfK], Minister Kornelius Martens from Grossweide. His text was "I know that my redeemer lives" [Job 19:25]. He told a number of stories from the life of the deceased and wondered "Who will now be the sunshine full of love which will visit the sick each morning?" A Russian cleric from Tokmak described how many tears Tavonius had dried up, and how friendly he had been to all people. Three times Dr. Tavonius had been very ill, and three times all the Russian churches and even the Jewish synagogue had prayed for him. God had heard their prayers. This time they had not known that the good doctor was sick, so they had not had the opportunity to pray! Between the various sermons and comments the choir sang appropriate songs.

The funeral procession then went back toward Muntau. It stopped opposite the hospital, where patients came out to pay their last respects. One man, the last to have been operated on by Dr. Tavonius, spoke so movingly that no eye remained dry. Hospital board representatives, friends and colleagues reminisced about the life of the deceased. Dr. Ketat, who had worked with Erich for many years, mentioned that in 27 years he had done well over 10,000 operations [slightly apocryphal?]. Yet he had maintained an interest in scientific developments and in training other medical personnel.

From there the last leg of the journey was to the Muntau cemetery, where Dr Erich Tavonius was buried up on a hill. "There rests his body," remarked a friend "but the memory of the righteous remains a blessing."

A poem written by Ruth Sturm in honor of Dr Tavonius ends with these two stanzas:

We believe that the door
To everlasting life has been opened for him;
His daily work on earth has been completed,
The crown will be given over there.

For he has certainly loved Jesus
As his Lord and Master.
Now he is surrounded by the peace of God
In the realm of the ransomed
(Translated by Helmut Huebert)

Sources:

Annual Report (1902) of Muntau Hospital, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, May 6, 1903, p 9

Enns, J J, Report about the Mennonite doctors in Russia

Feature Article, "Doktor Erich Tavonius," *Unser Blatt*, July 1927, pp 307-311, Biography,

possibly written by Kornelius Martens, picture of the grave site and a poem dedicated to Dr. Tavonius
Friedensstimme, 10 August 1918 p 8, announcing his return to practice
Friesen, A. A., Personal letter to Dr. Tavonius, 3 November 1922
Letter, Dr. Erich A. Tavonius, *Der Bote*, 10 April 1973, pp 1, 2, sent in by someone who had experienced the help of Dr. Tavonius
Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974, p 79
News Report, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 1 June 1927, p 2
News Report, Dr. med.. E. Tavonius 1872-1927, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 25 June 1958, p 11
Tavonius, Erich, Personal letter to A A Friesen, 19 June 1922
Tavonius, Erich, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 19 September 1923, p 10
Tavonius, Erich, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 8 June 1927 pp 5, 8
The Tavonius Family, Tavonius family documents and photos, and interview of Erika Tavonius by Astrid Koop, 1996
The family story is that Dr Erich Tavonius died of blood poisoning after a surgical operation. This, however, seems unlikely
Thiessen, Heinrich, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 6 May 1903, p 9

Note: It is likely that a brother of Erich Tavonius had a pharmacy in Zaporozhye

DR ERIKA TAVONIUS
(1908-2006)

Dr Tavonius, his four daughters, and their aunt. Erika is the youngest daughter, on the right

Erika Tavonius was born in 1908 in Halbstadt, Molotschna. Her parents were Dr Erich Tavonius and Margarethe Baumann. She was the youngest of four daughters; the family consisted of Ingeborg (became a radiology technician), Karin (became a physician), Sigried (became a teacher) and then Erika. She was apparently a sickly child; she and her sisters were raised by a succession of relatives and friends because their mother had a nervous condition, and was hospitalized for extended periods of time.

At the age of five years Erika started her education:

1. 1913-1915 - Private School in Halbstadt
2. 1915-1923 - Public School in Halbstadt
3. 1923-1925 - Teachers' College in Zaporozhye
4. 1925-1928 - Nursing School in Zaporozhye
5. 1928-1930 - Biological School in Dnepropetrovsk
6. 1930-1931 - Medical School in Dnepropetrovsk
7. 1931-1936 - Medical School in Simferopol. This gave her the medical degree in 1936

Probably during her time studying in Simferopol she married Sadik S Dschemilew. His fate is not recorded, but he presumably died.

Because Erika was a good student, the government allowed her to practice where she wished to. She went to the German Republic on the Volga, where she was based in the village of Alexanderhoehe, taking care of 25 villages in the surrounding area. In 1937 she married Peter Ruppel, born 1908, of Alexanderhoehe. Peter was subsequently sent to Siberia, still in 1937.

Erika moved to Sevastopol, Crimea, where her sister Ingeborg lived. Son Rudolf was born there in 1938. She lived in Sevastopol for two years, working as a physician in a railway office. She was in the Caucasus region in 1942, Dnepropetrovsk and Molotschna in 1943. The Great Trek brought her to the Warthegau region of Poland in 1944.

Erika spent three years in Germany, practicing medicine during this time. Somehow she seems to have attracted four foster daughters during this time. They were orphans, who all seemed

Dr Erika Tavonius

to do well with the help of Erika. They were Nelly Reinhardt, Kathe Lidtke, Gertrude Fitzler and Tamara Fitzler. They all went to South America with her; only Kathe accompanied her to Canada

In Germany Erika met C F Klassen, went to the Gronau Mennonite Central Committee camp, then on board the ship S S Heinzelmann sailed to Paraguay in 1948. She worked as a physician in the Fernheim Colony for six years, then in Friesland for one year, before she went Vineland, Ontario in 1954. There she worked as a nurse's aide for three months, then as an intern in the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital for two years.

She married John A Pankratz in 1957; the couple then moved to Reedley, Calfornia, where for 27 years Erika worked in a State Hospital for Handicapped Children, as a registered nurse. In 1985, after the death of her husband, she moved to Waterloo, where her son Rudolf built them a house; Rudolf died in 1996. Erika then retired to Vineland, where she died 24 September 2006, at the age of 97 years.

Sources:

Enns, John J Notes: *Abschriften, Ergaenzungen, Beifuegungen*

Huebert, H T, Dr Erich Tavonius in *Events and People*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1999, 11 sources quoted

The Tavonius Family, Astrid Koop, Vineland, Ontario, 1996, Interviews with Erika

DR ISAAK THIESSEN
(1885-1960)

Dr Isaak Thiessen was born 8 July 1885, probably in the Chortitza Colony. He obtained his medical degree at the University of Odessa. Presumably after he had completed his medical degree, he was approached by the committee in charge of Bethania Mental Hospital, to be a physician at that hospital. He asked for, and received help for several years of further studies at the Bodelschwing Bethel Institute in Bielefeld, Germany. While in Germany he also studied at the University of Munich. He then returned to Bethania as assistant to Dr Wilhelm Stieda, who had been the Chief-of-Staff at Bethania since 1911. Dr Stieda was drafted into the military during World War I, so Isaak seems to have inherited the position of Chief-of-Staff at Bethania from 1914 on. Development of Bethania was patterned after the Bethel Institute, offering health care and other advantages to the "weak ones in body and spirit."

Dr Isaak Thiessen

Isaak married Katharina Wallmann; she was born 13 September 1885 in Chortitza, Chortitza. The couple had at least four children: the oldest three were Olga (11 January 1916), Hermann (22 January 1919) and Margarethe (4 March 1924). The family lived in a residence on the grounds of the hospital. During the Russian Revolution the house of Katharina's parents burned to the ground, so the Andreas Wallmanns found shelter with the Isaak Thiessens at Bethania.

The Russian Revolution and the subsequent Civil War did not spare Bethania, with gangs of robbers quite freely sacking the place, endangering both patients and staff. This would have included Isaak and his family. The institution continued to function into the 1920s with considerable difficulty. After the Revolution Bethania was taken over by the province of Ekaterinoslav, then in 1925 by the federal government. All through this time Isaak tried valiantly to serve his patients in the hospital.

The final blow to Bethania came with the building of the Dneprostroy Power Dam at Einlage. The build up of the reservoir would mean that Bethania would be flooded, and obviously had to be evacuated. Isaak and Dr Erich Tavonius recommended that the Mennonite constituency should appeal to the government to transfer the Bethania patients to Halbstadt, where there was already a medical school. But this advice was not accepted. On 9 May 1927 all the patients,

The Isaak Thiessen family

including 33 Mennonites, were transferred to a mental hospital in Igren. None of the Mennonite personnel went with them. This would, of course include Dr Isaak Thiessen, so he was out of work.

. The Thiessen family moved to a house in Chortitza. After 1930 Isaak was employed at a hospital connected with the power project, Dneprostroy. In 1933 he was arrested, even though he had steered well clear of politics. The judgement was light; Isaak was to move to Alma Ata and his family could also relocate with him. The family did just that, and actually moved with him to his assigned spot, Tashkent. In Tashkent Isaak continued to work as a physician, while his daughter Olga worked as a chemist. Olga married a high ranking engineer, which probably made her own position more secure, but this did not stop the arrest of Isaak and Katharina in 1937. They were both sentenced to labour camps. Katharina died in the camp in two years, 28 February 1939.

Katharina and Isaak Thiessen, with children l to r Margaretha, Olga and Hermann

Isaak survived his ten year sentence, and when he was released he again worked as a physician, this time in Rybinsk, a city about 275 km north of Moscow. Daughter Olga in the meantime, in her work as chemist and laboratory technician, was transferred to Moscow. After 1948 Isaak could visit his daughter in Moscow, although he was not allowed to move there. Olga commented that he very much enjoyed visiting with his grand daughters each summer, until he died 10 July 1960 in Moscow.

Sources:

Bethania Mental Hospital (Russia), *Mennonite Encyclopedia* Vol I, pp 301-302

Biography of Dr Isaak Thiessen, *Mennonite Historian*, September 2001, pp 6, 11

Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 2008, 332, 333, 335

Huebert, Helmut T, Bethania Mental Hospital, article prepared for the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 2011

Klassen, N J, Mennonite Intelligentsia in Russia, *Mennonite Life*, April 1969, p 60

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Manitoba, p 81

Quiring, Walter and Bartel, Helen, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuellt War*, self-published, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963, p 49

Thiessen, Olga, *Biographi Olga Martynowa geb. Thiessen*, sent by Ingeborg Seel, Germany

It should be noted that Olga's autobiography mentions only three children. The early family picture, however, definitely shows four. We would go with the evidence of the picture, and assume that the Thiessen family had at least four children.

DR ARON JOHANN TOEWS
(1899-1920)

Aron Johann Toews was born 15 July 1899 in the Molotschna Colony, probably in Neukirch. Parents were Johann Aron Toews and Elisabeth Janzen; this couple had three children: Aron, Elisabeth and Justa. Mother Elisabeth died, and father Johann married again, Margaretha Janz, on 28 September 1903. This couple had at least another three children: Helena (1904), Johann (1906) and Maria (1908, died in 1910). Aron's younger brother, Johann B Toews later became an important executive in various capacities in the Mennonite Brethren Conference.

Aron was a good student. He completed the four year school in Halbstadt in two years, then passed the entrance examination for the University of Simferopol Medical School. The distinction of a governor's gold medal for being the outstanding student of the province helped pave the way for him to become one of the youngest students ever admitted to the medical faculty. At 21 years of age he was awarded the medical degree, in December 1920.

While in Halbstadt he met Sara Dyck, a few years his senior, and the daughter of a wealthy estate owner. They became engaged, but agreed to postpone their marriage until he completed his medical school.

Before he left classes in December 1920, Aron had a minor operation of curetting out an infected mastoid behind the right ear, under anaesthetic. He then travelled to the estate of his fiance, walking the last twenty miles of the way. On 25 December he preached to a small congregation on the estate. That evening Aron spiked a high fever; "blood poisoning" was diagnosed by Dr Dyck, his brother-in-law to be.

His condition rapidly deteriorated, and Aron Johann Toews died 30 December 1920. He was buried 2 January 1921. His younger brother, Johann B Toews, resolved to take up the cause, and become a medical doctor.

Sources:

Toews, J B, *J B: A Twentieth-Century Mennonite Pilgrim*, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studied, Fresno, California, 1995, pp 17-19

DR HEINRICH ANDREAS WARKENTIN
(1891-1957)

Heinrich Andreas Warkentin was born 25 February 1891 in Konteniusfeld, Molotschna. He was the first of ten children of Cornelius Heinrich Warkentin and Aganetha Janz. The family moved from Konteniusfeld to Waldhein, Molotschna late 1894 or early 1895. His parents founded the Waldheim Hospital in 1908.

Heinrich attended elementary school in Waldheim, then went on to *Zentralschule*. He attended the universities in St Petersburg and Odessa. Whether directly through university studies or by simply learning easily, he was gifted in languages, speaking Russian, Ukrainian, German and French. Possibly through some family pressure he attended medical school at the University of Odessa; graduating in 1914. Upon graduation he was immediately sent to the front lines during World War I. After 1918 he escaped from Russia.

From 1919-1920 Heinrich served as first secretary of the Ukrainian Diplomatic Mission in Amsterdam. He was therefore able to help the Mennonite *Studienkommission* in its travels. It had been organized to travel through Europe and to North America to study the possibility of Russian emigration. Actually Heinrich's father, Cornelius H Warkentin was one of the members of the *Studienkommission*. Heinrich was able to raise 2,500 guilders to pay the passage of the commission from Turkey to Amsterdam. He arranged for Dutch visas, so the commission could enter Holland, and Ukrainian passports, so that they later could enter the United States.

Heinrich immigrated to Canada in 1925. He served as a colonization agent for the Canadian Pacific Railway. On 4 April 1947 he was appointed supervisor of immigration for the CPR, with offices in Winnipeg. In this position "he supervised the immigration process from obtaining permission for entry to an actual welcome on the east coast." He informed Canadian Mennonites about the arrival of relatives, and arranged for the publication of lists of newcomers in the Mennonite press.

Heinrich decided early on that it would be difficult for him to pass the Canadian medical examinations, so he never attempted to practice medicine in Canada. He continued to live in Winnipeg, one of his interests being books, particularly history and politics; in time he had a valuable collection of paintings. He developed macular degeneration, becoming almost blind. His whole family took turns reading to him after work, usually from eight to ten in the evening.

Heinrich Andreas Warkentin died 20 June 1957 in Winnipeg of a stroke, and he was buried two days later. His books were donated to the University of Manitoba Library. He was not a member of any church, so his obituary did not appear in the Mennonite press.

Sources:
Warkentin Family History
Epp, Frank, *Mennonite Exodus*, Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, Altona, Manitoba, 1962, pp 46, 396, 398, 427

IV
NURSES
AND
MIDWIVES

Anna Rakko, nurse and midwife

Midwife Helena Berg with triplets in Muntau Hospital

Elisabeth Wall, Head Nurse Muntau Hospital 1900-1930

LIST OF MENNONITE NURSES IN RUSSIA

(entries with an asterisk* also have a more detailed biography)

There were many Mennonite nurses in Russia. Some were trained in other countries such as Germany, a number were trained in the Baltic region, while at least one had a nursing degree from Odessa. The *Morija* Deaconess Home trained many nurses who worked in the neighbouring hospitals such as Muntau, Ohrloff and Waldheim. The plan was that they could continue to live in *Morija* and even eventually retire there. With the onset of World War I a considerable number volunteered in hospitals in Melitopol and Simferopol, likely also in other hospitals

Berg, Agathe - nursed Katharina Ratzlaff (later Epp) when she was sick with typhus in Slavgorod about 1924. Katharina was very impressed by her service

Dueck, Anna - worked as nurse during World War I

Dyck, Anna - medical nurse in Simferopol in 1915, part of the Medical Corps

Dyck (nee Bartel), Maria (Manya)* - trained as nurse in Halbstadt, worked in Muntau, married Dr Peter Dyck, worked together in refugee camps in Germany 1930-1935, to Brazil, where they worked together 1935-1976, she died 1977

Enns, Aganetha - nurse at Bethania Hospital

Enns, Katharina* - born 19 July 1895 in Tiegenhagen, *Dorfschule*, *Maedchenschule*, training as midwife and nurse in Halbstadt, helped in deliveries of nephews and nieces, joined the *Zeltmission*, married Nikita Saloff-Astakhoff in 1921, to Canada in 1926, she continued to help husband with his work by translating for him until he died in 1983, she died 10 December 1994 in Winnipeg

Enns, Susanna (Susie) - worked as nurse in Muntau Hospital

Funk, Justina - head nurse at Bethania Mental Hospital

Goljan, Helene - nurse at the Muntau Hospital, of Polish origin
Helped Franz Wall with the administration and bookkeeping in the 1920s after the government had nationalized the hospital

Haggist, Frida - from Bombach, head nurse at Bethania Mental Hospital

Harder, Anna - took over as head nurse of the Ohrloff Hospital, Molotschna, when Alexandra Liblich left to be a missionary, from Lichtfelde

Harder (Rempel), Maria - from Sagradowka

Huebert, Miss - assistant head nurse at the Melitopol Mennonite Field Hospital, established October 1914, to help deal with the wounded of World War I

Klassen, Miss A - honorary nurse at the Melitopol Mennonite Field Hospital, established October 1914, to help deal with the wounded of World War I

Koop, Sarah* - *Morija* trained, Ohrloff Hospital, Bethania, to Canada, Concordia Hospital, With sister founded Maternity Nursing Home in Vineland, Ontario, died 1971

Kroeker, Helena - medical nurse in Simferopol in 1915, part of the Medical Corps

Lieblick, Alexandra - from Reval in the Baltics
Head nurse at Ohrloff Hospital, Molotschna, when it opened in 1910
Left to work as a missionary

Martens, Helena (Lenchen) - nurse at Bethania Hospital

Michelson, Vera (Verja) - from Estland in the Baltics, likely from the deaconess home in Revel.
Head nurse or administrator at *Morija*, and likely an instructor as well
Probably from 1909 to 1929
After the death of Vera Michelson in 1929 *Morija* was turned into a medical institute under the supervision of a Communist administrator

Pauls, Katharina (Katja) - nurse at Bethania Hospital

Penner, Jakob - male nurse first served in the Russo-Japanese War, then also during World War I, then served in White Army, fled to France, to Canada in 1924, died 1934

Rakko, Anna (nee Dueck)* - born 1910 in the Caucasus, trained as nurse and midwife, married Dr Wilhelm Rakko, to Neuland, Chaco, 1948, she was head nurse and midwife in the Neuland Hospital

Sawatzky (nee Reimer), Margaretha - training as nurse in Odessa, then secretary of the Red Cross in Odessa

Teske, Miss M - head nurse at the Melitopol Mennonite Field Hospital, established October 1914, to help deal with the wounded of World War I

Unruh, Maria - nurse at Bethania Hospital

Vogt, Maria* - born 25 August 1881 in Schoenwiese, Chortitza, nurses' training in Wiesbaden, Germany, worked as nurse in Russia, 1923 to Canada, Matron at Bethania nursing Home 1946-1961 Steinbach and Winnipeg

Wall, Elisabeth - Head Nurse at the Muntau Hospital 1900-1930

Wiens, Anna - medical nurse in Simferopol in 1915, part of the Medical Corps

Willms Maria (Mariechen) - worked as nurse in Muntau Hospital (some question about identity)

MARIA (MANYA) DYCK (NEE BARTEL)
NURSE
(1900-1977)

Manya (Maria) Bartel
wife of Dr Peter Dyck

Maria (Manya) Bartel was born 2 December 1900 in Gnadenfeld, Molotschna. Her parents were Franz Bartel and Helena Voth. She spent her childhood and youth in Gnadenfeld. She belonged to the Gnadenfeld Mennonite Church. She attended the *Maedchenschule* and the *Morija* Deaconess Home in Halbstadt, then worked in the Muntau hospital as nurse from 1926.

At the hospital in Muntau she met Dr Peter Dyck, from Karassan, Crimea. Peter worked at the Muntau Hospital from 1926 to 1928, first part of this time assisting Dr Erich Tavonius. Manya then also worked in the Bethania Mental Hospital.

Peter and Manya were married 5 August 1928. They had four children:

1. Eugen Alexander - born after 1928 in Russia, died as infant by 1930
2. Gisela Edith - married Willy Arthur Rebische, in 1956 in Witmarsum, Brazil, had one daughter
3. Ekkehart Guenther - born 2 December 1937 in Santa Catarina, Brazil, to Canada in 1971, married twice, died 14 September 1996 in Winnipeg
4. Rosvita Louise - born 1944 in Witmarsum, Brazil, teacher, remained single, died of cancer 31 October1989 in Curitiba, Brazil

Peter took over the Red Cross Accident Hospital at Luxemburg (formerly Gronau) in the Mariupol region; Manya worked there as a nurse. Eventually Peter and Maria were able to escape to Germany on 30 November 1930. They stayed in the refugee camps in Hammerstein and Moelln, in Lauenburg, where Peter worked as a physician, Manya as nurse. The same applied in the Mennonite homes in Wandsbeck and Altona, near Hamburg. Peter also studied tropical medicine in Hamburg. Then, after five years in Germany, they migrated to Brazil.

From 1935 to 1953 Peter and Manya worked in the jungle, at Kraul in Santa Catarina., then from 1953 to 1976 the Dycks worked together in Witmarsum, Parana, Brazil. In the work together Peter had always felt that Manya functioned as his conscience. She also was a leader in womens' groups in the settlements where they lived.

Manya had circulatory problems for some time and became increasingly disabled. She died 8 August 1977 in the "*Evangelischen Krankenhaus*." One of the things she often said when she was near death was "I know that my redeemer lives." The funeral was on 9 August, Pastor Helmer Fuerstenau leading the service. Six ministers spoke, as well as two representatives of the Womens' groups that she had previously lead.

Sources:
Obituary of Maria Dyck, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 26 October 1977, p 11
See also biography of husband Dr Peter Dyck

KATHARINA ENNS
NURSE
(1895-1994)

Katharina Enns was born 19 July 1895 in Tiegenhagen, Molotschna. She was the fifth of eight children of Peter Enns and Maria Poetker. She had a happy childhood and attended the village *Dorfschule*. She went on to the *Maedchenschule* in Halbstadt, then had further medical training in Halbstadt as a nurse, likely also as a midwife. Upon completion of her training she worked in the Muntau Hospital, but also helped with the births of her nephews and nieces.

Katharina Enns, the middle nurse (on the left) at Muntau Hospital

Katharina accepted Jesus as her Lord and was baptized on 23 June 1913.

With the unsettled times during World War I, Katharina's life lost its tranquility, instead became an adventure. She felt the urge to evangelize Mennonites and Russian people, and proceeded to move on this challenge. A tent-mission (*Zelt-Mission*) had been established. When the Kerensky government allowed religious freedom a group of *Sanitaeter* in Moscow, lead by Jacob J Dyck of the Crimea, established a Christian Soldiers' Association. After the conclusion of the war, with the return home of the soldiers, opportunity was sought to continue this evangelistic ministry. Five tents were eventually obtained from the Red Cross authorities for use in meetings in various regions of the country. And so the Tent-Mission was born.

In 1919 twenty-four young people, 12 men and 12 women from the Rueckenau Mennonite Brethren Church associated themselves with the mission work. Katharina Enns was one of these initial 24. In the next few months the team went from village to village to spread the gospel. There were five teams, headquarters in Panjutino, near the Russian train station of Losowaja. The work was carried out under difficult circumstances, some of the problems being lack of food and cleanliness. Even so they continued to evangelize and care for the sick. Without fear they preached to bandits and military leaders. Toward winter they moved closer to the Mennonite settlements, so that they could over-winter there. So it was that one team was in Eichenfeld of the Yazykovo Colony when Makhno bandits struck. A tent meeting was interrupted; in all five team members and 70 other villagers were murdered. Among the dead were team leader Jacob Dyck and a minister, Johann Schellenberg.

Despite the murders and disease, the work did not stop. Nikita Saloff-Astakhoff was elected president, with Adolf Reimer the Mennonite representative. The mission continued to work into the 1920s, but with increasing difficulty. Katharina married Nikita on 24 April 1921. The group spent the winter of 1922 in Barvenkovo, where Nikita spent two months in bed with typhus, Katharina nursing him back to health. At a conference called at the end of 1923 the Tent-Mission officially

folded.

Katharina and her husband Nikita migrated to Canada, arriving in Winnipeg 3 July 1926. By this time Katharina no longer practiced anything medical; she assisted her husband translating as he travelled across North America on his mission campaigns. Nikita, presumably with the help of his wife, produced about 20 books, among them the story of the mission, "In the Flame of the Russian Revolution." He could not resist the temptation to also include writing about the end times.

With steadily declining health Nikita's activities became more and more limited, until he died in 1983.

Katharina was then invited back to Winnipeg, where her relatives lived. She eventually lived in the Donwood Manor Nursing Home, where she died 10 December 1994

Katharina and Nikita Saloff-Astakhoff

Sources:

Jantz, Harold, "Die Zeltmission in Russland." *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, April 1995, pp 20, 21, and May 1995, pp 14, 15

SARA KOOP
NURSE

Sara Koop was born 11 May 1896 in Alexanderkrone, Molotschna. Her parents were Heinrich Heinrich Koop and Sara Klassen. She was the third child of the family. The family consisted of: Katharina (Tina) (1892), Aganetha (1894), Sara (1896), Anna (24 July 1898), Susanna (24 July 1898) (twin). Mother Sara died 10 August 1898, 17 days after the birth of the twins. Daughter Sara was then two years of age. Father Heinrich married again, Helena Ediger, on 16 February 1899. The couple had eight children, of whom three died in infancy.

Sara lived her childhood and youth in Alexanderkrone. She attended *Dorfschule* in her home village. It is not known whether she went to *Zentralschule*. She felt that she needed to serve the Lord, so she attended the *Morija* Deaconess Home in Halbstadt, for training as both deaconess and nurse. She likely graduated about 1916. Thereafter she worked in the Ohrloff Hospital for five years, then from 1921 was a head nurse at Bethania Mental Hospital in Grossweide.

Nurse Sara Koop

In 1924 the whole Koop family, parents and all of the children, immigrated to Canada. She and her sister Tina played a role in the founding of Concordia Hospital in Winnipeg. Sara was the acting head of maternity nursing 1928-1939. To be able to continue as a fully qualified nurse, Sara attended highschool in Kingsville, Ontario, then took the three year nursing course at St Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg. She worked as a nurse in Winnipeg, Steinbach and Toronto.

In 1941 Sara and sister Tina opened a "Maternity Nursing Home" in Vineland, Ontario. In the 13 years the sisters did this work 732 infants were born and 300 patients with minor ailments were treated. In 1954 the work became too hard for the sisters, so they retired. In 1961 they moved into the newly built senior citizens home in Vineland.

Tina died 30 July 1962

Sara had increasing heart failure and died 15 May 1971. Two days later, on 17 May, her funeral was held in the Vineland Mennonite Brethren Church, Pastor Jakob Neufeld presiding.

Sources:

Die Mennonitische Rundschau, Obituary of Nurse Sara Koop, 16 June 1971
Dueck, Abe J, *Concordia Hospital: Faith, Health and Community: 75 Years*, 2003, pp 17-19

ANNA RAKKO (NEE DUECK)
NURSE AND MIDWIFE

Anna Rakko, nurse and midwife

Anna Dueck was born 20 November 1910 in Chasov-Yurt, in the Caucasus. She trained as a nurse and midwife. She married Dr Wilhelm Rakko, whom she met in her student days in Halbstadt. Wilhelm Rakko came from Waldheim, Molotschna, and obtained his medical degree in Odessa. Wilhelm and Anna were married on 20 March 1933.

The couple had two children, Elfriede, born in the latter part of 1933 and Arnold in 1940. They made it to Germany with the German retreat from Russia in 1943/44. They became German citizens. Eventually they migrated to the Neuland Colony in the Paraguayan Chaco in 1948.

Husband Wilhelm was the doctor in the Neuland Hospital, Anna the head nurse and midwife. In 1955 they were baptized, and became active members of the Mennonite Church. They retired to Churitiba, Brazil in 1978, and lived in a nice house in Boqueirao. Anna died 9 October 1996. Husband Wilhelm died 15 January 2006.

Sources:
Obituary, Anna Rakko (nee Dueck), *Der Bote*, 13 November 1996, p 6
Obituary, Dr Wilhelm Rakko, *Bibel und Pflug*, March 2006, p 10

MARIA VOGT
NURSE

Maria Vogt was born 25 August 1881 in Schoensee, Chortitza. She was the second of ten children of Minister Andreas Vogt and Aganetha Block

At age 28 Maria went to Germany to study nursing. The first year she spent at *Steglitz-Berlin Frauen Missionsschule,* a Baptist Bible School, where she also learned some English. In 1912 she began nurses' training in Wiesbaden, Germany, receiving her certification in 1915. Courses consisted of medicine, infectious diseases, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, dermatology and surgery

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 complicated her stay; she was kept under observation since she was an enemy "alien." She was, however, never arrested. One of her nursing supervisors, Countess Uexkuell, moved in influential circles, and helped her find employment. For a time she worked in a German military hospital.

After the death of her father before Christmas, 1914, Maria resolved to go home. With extreme difficulty, travelling through Sweden and Finland, she was able to reach home in 1915. Back at home she worked for a year at the near-by Bethania Mennonite Mental Hospital.

Maria received her Russian nursing certificate and worked at a military hospital in Chortitza, treating the war wounded. During the Russian Revolution she worked in various make-shift hospitals, treating serious infections. She was then also employed in the Railway Hospital in Schoenwiese

In 1923 Maria migrated to Canada. She and her brother Abram Vogt established a small hospital in Steinbach in 1928, which in 1938 was converted into an Invalid Home.

When Bethania Home for the Aged and Infirm was established in Winnipeg, opening on 1 March 1946, *Schwester Maria* was appointed matron. She brought with her a wealth of experience, but also a determined sense of mission. In October 1947 she was designated as "*Die Seele des Unternehmens...*" (The soul of the project). She was not liberal in showing her affection outwardly, but demonstrated her love more in "action and truth."

Maria Vogt died in Winnipeg 4 January 1961. She had been at work that day, but suffered a heart attack in the evening. She died at Concordia Hospital at the age of 79 years.

Sources:

Family information via Margaret Kroeker
Huebert, Helmut T, *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol 2*, Springfield Publishers. Winnipeg, Canada, p 46
The Story of Bethania, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996, pp 54-58

Nurses Mary Dyck and Maria Vogt
at Bethania, Winnipeg

Schwester Maria

Mennonite Nurses in Russia

Nurses at Bethania. l to r: Helena Martens, Katharina Pauls, Aganeta Enns, standing Maria Unruh

Jakob Penner, male nurse, first served in Russo-Japanese War

Nurse Anna Dueck

Mennonite nurses serving in Simferopol during World War I

LIST OF MENNONITE MIDWIVES IN RUSSIA

(entries with an asterisk* also have a more detailed biography)

Midwives were commonly consulted in Russia, for virtually every birth Quite likely every village had one, although sometimes there was only one for every two or three villages. In some regions it seemed that the only credentials required for the position were that it be a female, and that she have observed at least one previous birth. There were, however, fully trained midwives available. At least three completed the midwife school in Riga, at least another three had training in Germany and Austria, and a number were trained locally in Halbstadt or Muntau. Some midwives then migrated to Paraguay, where they continued to function, even expanded their practice to include other medical conditions. Most of those who left for North America also attempted to continue, even expanded their area of work well beyond midwifery. Here, however, they ran into problems, since regular medical care was often available. But many Mennonites much prefer folk medicine to regular medicine, so they were still busy.

Berg, Helena* - born 1859, for decades best known and busiest midwife in Halbstadt, delivered four of Benjamin Unruh's children, on Trek, to Canada 1947/48, died 1951 in Winnipeg

Brucks (nee Dueck), Aganetha - born 1889 in Klippenfeld,1907 started training in Muntau under Dr Tavonius, midwifery in Orenberg, then after 1926 in Coaldale, Alberta,1939 moved to Yarrow, only sporadic deliveries, died 1972

Duerksen, Anna* - born 1884 in Alexanderthal, Molotschna, trained in Midwifery School in Riga, Latvia, moved to Saratov, eventually to Paraguay in 1930, practiced in Gnadenheim, retired to Canada in 1971, died 1975

Epp, Katharina* - born 1902 in Steinfeld, Sagradovka, eventual training in Halbstadt, fled across Amur in 1930, settled in Fernheim, Paraguay, midwife, bone-setter, nurse, physiotherapist, to Filadelfia in 1965, less work, died 1984

Enns (nee Klippenstein), Margaretha* - born 19 April 1888 in Alexanderwohl, Molotschna , married 1908, 11 children, trained as midwife likely in early 1920s, active practice in Russia, to Canada 1926, continued to practice there, first in Zeneta, Saskatchewan, then after 1929 in Yarrow, B C

Friesen, Mrs Isaac - midwife consultant, lived in Novokovna, with her experience and skill she was able to manipulate and deliver a breach presentation, worked in the 1860s

Harms (nee Harder), Elisabeth* - trained as midwife in Riga, worked in Schoenfeld, then Franzthal, married Heinrich Harder, to Canada 1925, BC in 1928

Hildebrandt (nee Lehn), Mathilda - 1904 she and husband to Germany, Leipzig and Dresden, to study, she as midwife, he as naturopath, developed extensive midwifery practice in Nikolaipol, Russia, she and her husband built a private sanitarium, continued in Rosthern, Saskatchewan, 1935 to Yarrow, where she helped her husband

Klippenstein, Helena - midwife in Russia, mother-in-law of Heinrich Klippenstein

Nachtigal (nee Dick), Anna - many years in Muntau Hospital as practical nurse and midwife, married Abram Nachtigal, who had 11 children, emigrated to Canada 1924, settled in Arnaud, Manitoba for 11 years, practised midwifery, 1935 moved to Yarrow, only occasional delivery

Nikkel, Maria - well known midwife in Siberia

Peters (nee Reimer), Anna - born 1881, trained as midwife in Riga, met husband Cornelius C Peters, teacher in the Kuban, migrated to Canada, practiced in Herbert, Langham and Davidson, Saskatchewan, then Agassiz, BC, died 1971

Rabsch, Elisabeth - born 1884, practised midwifery both in Russia and on the prairies, but discontinued medical work in Yarrow BC, died 1978

Rakko, Anna (see biography under nurse category)- born 1910 in Caucasus, trained as nurse and midwife, to Germany in 1943/44, to Neuland Colony in Paraguay in 1948, husband the doctor, Anna nurse and midwife in the hospital, retired 1978, died 1996 in Brazil

Rennert, Frau - fully trained midwife worked in the Slavgorod Mennonite Colony about 1924

Sawatzky (nee Hiebert), Maria - born 1842 in Schoenfeld, Bergthal Colony, began midwifery in 1865 in Wiesenfeld, in 43 years delivered 1,013 babies, cared for 400 other individuals

Thielmann (nee Dekker), Sara - born 1878 in Kleefeld, to Samara where she trained as midwife, recorded 1,448 births between 1909 and 1941, to Siberia in 1919, then Canada in 1929, Glenbush, Saskatchewan, then Beamsville, Ontario, died 1968

Thiessen, (nee Born), Katharina* - born 1842 Fuerstenau, Molotschna, to Germany to study, midwifery, manipulation and naturopathy, 1874 to Kansas, 1885 to Manitoba, sued by the local doctors, then sold Dr Chase Patent Medicine

Warkentin, Aganetha - trained in Vienna, Austria as nurse and midwife. Together with husband Cornelius Heinrich Warkentin established the Waldheim Hospital in 1908. Likely worked in the hospital as midwife, nurse and administrator. The hospital was taken over by the government in 1922, so Aganetha and family left for the USA in 1923. Her husband Cornelius was already there.

Advertisement in *Friedensstimme* 29 October 1918 p 8

Midwife, with diploma and many years of experience, looking for a position dealing with 2 or 3 villages, and a fixed salary

HELENA BERG (NEE PENNER)
MIDWIFE

Helena Penner was born 16 November 1859. She was the daughter of Aron and Anna Penner. She married a Mr Berg.

It is not known whether she had official midwife training, or if she learned as an apprentice, but for a number of decades Helena was the best known and busiest midwife in Halbstadt, Molotschna. She delivered some of Benjamin Unruh's children: Liesel (1914), Olga (1915), Maria (1917) and Fritz (1918). At one point she delivered triplets at the Muntau Hospital.

When the German Forces retreated from Russia during World War II, she went on the Great Trek, escaping to Germany 1943-1944. She then migrated to Canada in 1947 or 1948.

Helena wrote a booklet about her experiences.

Helena was bedridden for a considerable length of time, staying in the Bethania Nursing Home in Winnipeg. She died there on 1 October 1951.

The correspondent who reported her death remarked that Helena had led a rich, busy life and that she had helped many a woman as well as infants through her diligence and kindness.

Sources:

Die Mennonitische Rundschau, News Item, 12 December 1951, p 14

Quiring, Walter and Helen Bartel, *Als Ihre Zeit Erfuelllt War*, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1963, p 79

Unruh, Heinrich B, *Fuegungen and Fuerungen*, pp 75, 76

Midwife Helena Berg with triplets in Muntau Hospital

Helena Berg, midwife

ANNA DUERKSEN
MIDWIFE

Anna Duerksen was born 6 June 1884 in Alexanderthal, Molotschna. Her parents were David J Duerksen and Anna Reimer. Her father died when she was 16, about 1900. She then worked on an estate as a housemaid. The owners paid for Anna to go to a midwifery school in Riga, Latvia. She obtained her diploma, then thereafter worked as a midwife.

Anna married Franz Duerksen on 9 August 1909. Franz was a farmer and a blacksmith, making plough shares and wagons. Before she married him Franz had to promise to allow her to continue her midwifery. The couple eventually had eight children, four boys and four girls. Only two girls reached adulthood:

Kaethe - (sixth child) born 2 November 1922, married Martin Duerksen

Erna - (seventh child) born 13 January 1925, married Jakob Wiens

Sometime during World War I Franz served in the Forestry Alternate Service (*Forstei*) In 1922 he contracted typhoid fever, as a result of which he developed a draining sinus of his leg (probably osteomyelitis - bone infection) which needed a daily change of dressing for the rest of his life.

The Duerksens lived in Alexanderthal for some time, then moved to Saratov. There was one village, but also a cluster of four villages, just south of the much larger Barnaul Colony of western Siberia. Anna served the whole cluster, not just her own village.

In 1929 the Duerksens went to Moscow so escape from Russia, and eventually got to Riga, Latvia. They wanted to go to Canada, but were delayed by Canadian doctors because they thought there was trachoma in the family. They were held up in Riga for 9 months. There was a group of about 10 families waiting. They contacted the MCC and were told that they would not get into Canada, but that a ship in Hamburg was leaving for South America in two weeks.

The Duerksens arrived in South America in August 1930, and settled in the Fernheim Colony of the Gran Chaco. They first settled in Rosenort (village No 10), but then in 1933 were asked to move to a more central location, Gnadenheim (village No 3). Anna practiced as midwife, both in Gnadenheim, from where she was called for home deliveries, and in the relatively nearby hospital in Filadelfia, where she did the hospital deliveries. Anna was also a very good bone-setter. To hold the bones in place she used small sticks along the limb, then bound them together with cloth strips.

Anna and Franz retired to Canada in 1951. They first spent one year in Ontario, then moved to British Columbia where they had a raspberry farm in Yarrow. When they fully retired they moved to Clearbrook. There Anna needed to be kept in a care home.

Franz died 3 February 1964.

After years of deteriorating mental capacity Anna died 28 February 1975.

Sources:
Duerksen family history

Anna Duerksen in Riga, Latvia
at Midwife Training School

Newly-weds Franz and Anna
Duerksen

Anna at the funeral of two of her children, Jakob (3 mo)
and Anna (15 mo old), standing, son Franz. Husband
Franz away on Forestry Service

KATHARINA EPP (NEE RATZLAFF)
MIDWIFE

Katharina Epp, midwife

Katharina Ratzlaff was born 16 August 1902 in Steinfeld, Sagradovka. Her parents were Abram Ratzlaff and Katharina Fast. The family moved to Alexanderkrone of the Barnaul (Slavgorod) Colony in western Siberia about 1911.

Katharina had only four years of *Dorfschule*, although she was clever. She was converted at the age of ten, was baptized and joined the church at the age of 14, the church where her father was the minister. She had typhus at age 22, and was very impressed by nurse Agathe Berg during her illness.

Katharina wanted to go to Halbstadt to study, but her mother insisted that she instead go to a Frau Wiens in Steinfeld to learn bone-setting. This was not a good experience. She mainly learned how not to do things. She did learn some midwifery from a fully trained midwife, Frau Rennert, who worked in the Slavgorod Colony

Eventually Katharina did get to Halbstadt, after working half a year at Bethania to earn money. She had three years of study in the medical school at Halbstadt. She spent all her spare time at learning more about midwifery under the supervision of capable Dr Franz Willms

Katharina married Johann Epp on 22 November 1929 in Lichtfelde, Molotschna. They tried to migrate from Russia via Moscow in 1929, but were not successful. They moved to Schumanovka of the Amur district in May 1930. On 17 December 1930 Katharina and Johann joined 60 sleighs, fleeing across the Amur River ice, eventually reaching the Chinese city of Harbin. Of the 700 Mennonite refugees in Harbin, 200 reached North America. Through the help of MCC and other relief agencies, 373 people, including the Epps, went to Paraguay in May of 1932. They settled in villages of the north and east region of Fernheim - called the *Harbiner Ecke*. The Epps settled in Karlsruhe (No 16), built up a farm, lead the local church, and looked after the medical care of the area.

Johann and Katharina had six children, Kaethe in 1932, then roughly every two years Gerhard, Hans, Heinz, Anita and Hillegonde. Because she had the greatest experience and training, Katharina fulfilled the role of midwife, nurse, bone-setter and physiotherapist in the village and area. She did recognize her limitations, and often asked her children to pray for her when she went to deal with difficult cases.

From 1932 to 1943 Katharina was involved in 205 births. With this large number of deliveries there was only one maternal death. Katharina found it difficult to balance her medical life with home and family. With a yard full of wagons waiting for her, it is not surprising that the meals were often either burned or cold. Her days were mostly long, and the nights short. She had a special soft spot for the Indians who lived near their settlement, and were often employed by the Mennonite farmers.

Since very few people could actually pay Katharina, most of the family income came from the land. Katharina, together with her farmer and pastor husband, also worked the land, ploughing and sowing. Sometimes a farmer would undertake to do the farmwork for her, while Katharina went

to look after his family! On occasion she did not like this arrangement, because the farmer was not as meticulous with the farm work as she would have been.

Johann was an ordained minister and Katharina played a leading role in the establishment of a women's group in the church. In1965 the Epps moved to Filadelfia, where life off the farm was somewhat easier. They both continued to work actively in the church. They still had the yard and the garden to look after.

Katharina's work was coming to an end. Doctors were now available, and there was a hospital. For her it was a blessing that her children and grandchildren became doctors, nurses, teachers, ministers and farmers. Katharina's health slowly deteriorated, so that in time she was wheelchair bound and lost her speech.

The woman called the "Strong Lady in the Chaco" died 15 October 1984.

Sources:

Jahrbuch fuer Geschichte un Kultur der Mennoniten in Paraguay, 6 Jahrgang 2005, pp131-159

Ratzlaff, Gerhard, son, personal information

Unrau, Ruth, from "Encircled," "Starke Frau im Chaco," reprinted in *Der Bote*, 4 November 1987. pp 10, 12

MARGARETHA ENNS (NEE KLIPPENSTEIN)
MIDWIFE
(1888-1977)

Margaretha Klippenstein was born 19 April 1888 in Alexanderwohl, Molotschna. Her parents were Johann Klippenstein and Helena Wall. The couple had nine children, of which Margaretha was the seventh. The family moved to Lugovsk, a village of the Neu Samara Colony, where Margaretha then spent her youth, and had her elementary education. She was baptized in 1905, and joined the flourishing Lugovsk Mennonite Brethren Church. Margaretha was a striking young woman, tall, slender, with a mass of curly brown hair. Fellow church member, Heinrich Enns fell in love with her; the couple was married 14 February 1908, Abram Martens, leader of the Lugovsk Mennonite Brethren Church officiating.

Shortly after their marriage they homesteaded in Lichtfelde (Petrovka) a newly formed village of the Barnaul Mennonite Colony of western Siberia. They had a difficult beginning; the growing season was short, and the markets were far removed. Added to this was their own personal tragedy in that their first-born Helena died of whooping cough at the age of nine months. Hers was the first grave in the Lichtfelde cemetery. An additional seven children were born to the couple in Lichtfelde; they were : Helena (1908 died 1909), Margaretha (1910), Helena (1911), Sarah (1913), Heinrich (1916), Johann (1918), Peter (1920), Anna (1922), Jacob (1924 died 1924), Jacob (1927), George (1931).

During World War I Heinrich served in the *Forstei*, leaving Margaretha to manage the farm. She was obviously talented in various fields; she conducted the choir for women in their church, which in time also included the men.

In 1923 Heinrich and Margaretha moved to Blumenort, another village of the Barnaul Colony. Having just recovered from typhoid fever, Margaretha still felt ready to embark upon a direction in her life which had long been her passion. Apparently she asked the question of Heinrich "Will you let me do the work the Lord wants me to do?" After some thought he finally answered "If you think this is what must be, I will let you go."

Midwife Margaretha Enns

Margaretha became an apprentice of Anna Duerksen, who lived in the village of Saratov of the Saratov Colony, located about 30 km south of the Barnaul Colony. Anna was fully trained , having official midwifery and medical training in Riga. Margaretha left her seven children and the running of the household to her 14-year-old daughter Margaretha, assisted by 13-year-old Helena. Only once during the next three months did she go home to see her family. Having completed her preparation she went into full practice as midwife and nurse. She was somewhat worried about carrying microbes into her own home, so she followed the advice of her own midwife mother, Helena Klippenstein. She lit a fire with wet straw outside the house, and stood in the smoke. She then took a mouth-full of garlic. This combination surely should kill all the germs!

In October of 1926 the family left for Canada, landing in Quebec on 21 November. They first lived in Zeneta, Saskatchewan. There she administered medical help and delivered the babies born to the Mennonite families. After three years, when they themselves had eight live children, they moved to Yarrow, British Columbia. Here she delivered many babies and provided medical care in Yarrow and the neighbouring village of Greendale until the 1940s. Often the births actually took place in the Enns home, mother and child staying there for up to 10 days. When the Enns family built a larger home, they added a guest room which doubled as a care facility. Margaretha also functioned as a nurse, regularly consulting the Chilliwack physicians. The physicians even gave her a medical bag, embossed with the initials "ME." It contained medical equipment she needed as well as some medications.

The Enns family paid the price of her constant activity as midwife and nurse. The eldest three daughters were deprived of higher education which they longed for, because they had to look after the household and look after the younger children.

Medical practice was not Margaretha's sole interest. Soon after they arrived in Yarrow Heinrich and Margaretha were appointed as deacons by the Yarrow Mennonite Brethren Church.

Husband Heinrich died 18 March 1976.

Margaretha died 5 February 1977, the funeral being 10 February. Minister Peter D Loewen emphasized that Margaretha's love for the Lord had motivated her ministry.

Sources:

Epp, Irma, "Margaretha Klippenstein Enns, 1888-1977" pp 22-27 in *Village of Unsettled Yearnings*, Edited by Leonard N Neufeldt, Touchwood Editions, Victoria, BC, 2002

ELISABETH HARMS (NEE HARDER)
MIDWIFE
(1887-1983)

Elisabeth Harder was born 13 March 1887 in Blumstein, Molotschna. Her parents were Johann Harder and Elisabeth Penner; they had seven children of which Elisabeth was the eldest. Father Johann, a carpenter, died at the age of 35, leaving his wife with seven children. Mother Elisabeth, the eldest daughter Elisabeth, and the youngest child stayed together, but were moved to another village; the middle five children were distributed to various relatives.

Elisabeth apparently suffered from poor health, so she was initially unable to find employment; when her health improved she worked as a maid for estate owners. From the time of her youth she was interested in caring for the sick. With this in mind she was determined to study to become a midwife. The family was poor, so she requested a loan from one of her rich estate owning relatives. At first he was only willing to finance her wedding and the establishment of a home, but impressed by her determination he relented, "On the other hand, you haven't done anything foolish yet." When he finally agreed to finance her education, she began her studies in Riga, a city her mother thought was "ungodly and dangerous." Elisabeth studied in a German hospital, completing her program in one year; her studies emphasized midwifery, but also included first aid, diagnosis of medical conditions, and administration of medications. For the practicum she went to the homes of patients to deliver babies, but she also worked on the hospital obstetrical and surgical wards. She received her certification as midwife on 11 July 1912, at the age of 25 years.

Midwife Elisabeth Harms
(nee Harder)

Elisabeth was hired by the village of Schoenfeld as midwife in 1913. She lived on the *Zentralschule* campus in the home of teacher Gerhard Schroeder and his wife Gertruda. In the more unsettled times she and the teachers were spared to some extent because all participants, be they Makhno, Reds or Whites, needed help for those who were ill, wounded or dying. Elisabeth stayed in Schoenfeld at least until after New Year's of 1919. She then left for Franzthal, Molotschna, where she continued to work as a midwife. She was baptized on 8 October 1923, and joined the Mennonite Brethren Church; both she and her sister taught Sunday School and organized a girls club. Heinrich Harms was also a Sunday School teacher in Franzthal and led the youth choir. He was attracted to Elisabeth. Mutual attraction grew, and they were married in Franzthal in 1924.

The couple immigrated to Canada in 1925, first briefly staying in Plum Coulee, Manitoba, then Drake, Saskatchewan, followed by Nokomis, Saskatchewan. In 1928 they moved, by train, to Yarrow, British Columbia. The couple was anxious to have a family, but Elisabeth had a number of miscarriages. Finally on 18 August 1929 she gave birth to a daughter, Lillian, in the Chilliwack Hospital. She attributed this success to the British Columbia weather. The delivery itself had been difficult. Heinrich recorded that the doctor fought to save the lives of both mother and child, while he himself pled with God.

Basically, partly on the advice of his friends, Heinrich did not approve of Elisabeth's function as a midwife, certainly not in a hospital setting. There were very few (two) automobiles in the community, so Elisabeth continued her work, even delivering a considerable number of babies in her own home, mother and child then staying there for up to a week. Daughter Lillian remembers much of this work and seems to have helped her mother.

In 1957, when Elisabeth was 70 years of age, the couple moved to Vancouver. It seems that Elisabeth's extra activities were restricted to growing houseplants. By the late 1960s her activities were somewhat limited by heart disease. In 1970 husband Heinrich died of cancer. Though she was blind the last year of her life, Elisabeth never complained.

Elisabeth Harms (nee Harder) died 14 July 1983 in Vancouver. At her funeral John Dyck, whose spouse at one time had been delivered by Elisabeth, was one of the speakers. His text was Revelation 14:13 "...that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them!"

Sources:

Harms, Lillian and Sawatsky, Lora, "Elizabeth Harder Harms, 1887-1983" pp 17-22 in *Village of Unsettled Yearnings*, Edited by Leonard N Neufeldt, Touchwood Editions, Victoria, BC, 2002

KATHARINA THIESSEN
MIDWIFE AND BONE-SETTER
(1842-1915)

Katharina Thiessen was born 1842 in Fuerstenau, Molotschna. Her parents were Peter W Born (1817-1869) and Anna Wall (1816-1873). Katharina went to Germany about 1860 to study medicine, which probably included midwifery, manipulative and naturopathic medical techniques. She came back to Russia, where she married Abraham Karl Thiessen on 7 September 1862. They had one child, Abraham, who was born in 1865. They later adopted at least three daughters. Katharina in the meantime pursued her medical practice.

Abraham and Katharina Thiessen

In 1874 the Thiessens immigrated to Hillsboro, Kansas, where they began farming and Katharina continued her clinical practice. In 1885 they moved to Manitoba, settling between Winkler and Schanzenfeld. Katharina continued her medical practice; she had knowledge, experience, and spoke Low German. Eventually a new large house was built where Katharina had a reception area, a pharmacy, an operating room and overnight rooms. Apparently Katharina had some additional medical training in Cincinnati, Ohio, around 1895.

The doctors in the surrounding towns took her to court for practicing without a Canadian medical licence. She did not contest the charge, paid the $50 fine, but continued to practice. She did, however, concentrate more on selling Dr Chase Patent Medicine.

Katharina retired from her medical practice after her husband, Abraham Thiessen suffered a stroke in 1907. One of her adopted daughters stayed with her and was a real help in caring for her paralyzed husband. Abraham died 27 April 1910.

Katharina Thiessen died 15 September 1915. She was instrumental in improving the social life of the community by introducing hygenic baby deliveries, training in nutrition and informed diagnosis of common ailments.

Sources:

Epp, Irma, Harms, Lillian, Sawatzky, Lora "Midwifery: A Ministry" p 14 in *Village of Unsettled Yearnings*, Edited by Leonard N Neufeldt, Touchwood Editions, Victoria, BC, 2002
Katharina Thiessen Fonds, Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Canada

V

OTHER MEDICAL

MENNONITE DENTISTS

Duerksen, Elisabeth - born July1914, daughter of Gerhard David Duerksen, she and mother Maria Duerksen exiled to Northern Russia, landed up in Chelybinskaya, where mother died in 1954. Elisabeth worked as dentist

Fast, Abram P - from Blumenort, trained as dentist in Berlin in 1909

Kroeker, Jakob F - born 1892, served in Russian Army, medical section as dentist
After 6 years of service in the army set up dental practice in Karassan, Crimea
Due to uncertainty he and family migrated to Canada in 1926, Rosthern, Saskatchewan
Russian papers insufficient to allow him to practice in Canada

Thiessen - advertising in *Der Botschafter* January 1, 5, 12, that he would be accepting dental patients at the *Hochheimer Evangelisches Krankenhaus* from 4-20 January 1910

MENNONITE TECHNICIANS

Tavonius, Ingeborg - eldest daughter of Dr Erich Tavonius, trained as Xray technician, perhaps in Germany, therefore before 1914, helped install Xray equipment in Muntau Hospital, worked in German Hospital in Simferopol

Thiessen, Olga - chemist and laboratory technician, first in Tashkent, then in Moscow

MENNONITE PHARMACISTS

Gauderen, August - Baltic origin, pharmacist at the Tiege, Sagradovka Hospital from 1877, until he died in 1943

Kroeker - druggist at the Bethania Hospital

Tavonius - brother of Dr Erich Tavonius had a pharmacy in Schoenwiese, he loved nature - nice big building, modern drugstore

Warkentin, Cornelius Heinrich - owned a general store and pharmacy in Waldheim, Molotschna

MENNONITE MEDICAL ADMINISTRATORS

Andres, Maria - business matron at Bethania Hospital 1925 (house mother)

Friesen, Jakob P - administrator of the *Morija* Deaconess Home, certainly 1915-1920, He was a minister

Guenther, Heinrich Dietrich - administrator Ohrloff hospital, likely from its opening in 1910 and onwards

Wall, Franz K - founder of Muntau Hospital. Administrator 1889 until his death in 1904

Wall, Franz Jr - administrator of Muntau Hospital from 1904, until he was removed from the position in 1930

Wall, Gerhard - manager at the Halbstadt Hospital, likely Muntau Hospital

Warkentin, Cornelius and Aganetha - founders of the Waldheim Hospital in 1908, and administrators, Cornelius until 1919 and Aganetha until 1923

Wiebe, Jakob - "house father" Bethania Hospital 1925

JACOB FRANZ KROEKER
(Dentist)
(1892-1969)

Jacob Franz Kroeker was born 25 August 1892 in Karassan, Crimea. His father was Franz Franz Kroeker. Jacob was likely drafted into the medical corps (*Sanitaetsdienst*) at the start of World War I in 1914. Since he showed interest in dentistry he was sent to Moscow to pursue studies in this field. This included a two month course in first aid. After two months he was allowed to work as a dentist.

Jacob Franz Kroeker, dentist

During the war he worked in a number of cities, at one place receiving additional on-the-job dental training. At the end of two and a half years he wrote an exam and received a diploma. Before being given full permission to practice as a dentist, and to make the diploma legal, Jacob was sent to Moscow for final examinations. He also had to demonstrate his dentistry skills before four dentists in Moscow; he received good grades.

Jacob was now fully qualified to work as a military dentist. With a helper he was said to have pulled up to 120 teeth a day, as well as doing numerous fillings. There were also many serious abscesses. The days were long and tiring.

Despite the unsettled state of the country, Jacob was periodically allowed to go home for much needed rest. During one of the longer breaks he married Maria Sawatzky on 9 February 1919. She was the daughter of Peter Sawatzky of Donilovka.

Children of Jacob and Maria were: (three born in the Crimea, four in Canada)

1. Jacob - 30 April 1921, in Karassan
2. Hermann - 30 March 1923, in Karassan
3. Marie (Mimi) (Loewen) - 22 March 1925, in Karassan
4. Vera (Voth) - 9 February 1927, Drake, Saskatchewan
5. Harry - 16 July 1928, Drake, Saskatchewan
6. Elsie (Solis) - 3 July 1931, Drake, Saskatchewan
7. Menno - 5 December 1933, Drake, Saskatchewan

After six years with the military (by now probably the White Army) Jacob requested his discharge. He was allowed to set up a dental service in his home town, Karassan; he had to serve both civilians and the military. Pay was minimal, and often "in kind"; an egg, a hand full of flour, home-made noodles. The first aid course he previously had taken was also often useful. Before long he had a promising dental practice. With the Communist take-over he was allowed to continue his practice, but had to account for all his work, each tooth pulled, and each tooth filled. He was constantly watched.

But times were unsettled, and it was difficult to work under the Communist regime, so Jacob felt it was better to leave. By that time Jacob and Maria had three young children. The family was able to emigrate to Canada, crossing the ocean on the Canadian Pacific S S Montrose. They arrived 18 November 1925, then by train finally reaching Rosthern Saskatchewan. Jacob brought his dental equipment with him. Unfortunately he had to undergo the same hardships as all the other refugees; he had to work on the surrounding farms. The family finally settled in Drake, Saskatchewan.

Evenings Jacob went to school to learn English. He did not have enough finances to get into the field of dentistry, and his Russian documents were not sufficient to allow him to practice. He did, however, receive permission from a group of dentists to work only when dire situations arose.

The postmaster, however, discovered mail addressed to Dr Jacob Frank Kroeker containing dental material from Toronto, for freezing and filling teeth. The postmaster called the RCMP, who eventually curtailed Jacob's practice, but allowed him to keep his equipment.

The Kroekers moved to Niagara-on-the Lake, to a fruit farm, but then in time retired to St Catharines. Jacob Franz Kroeker died 7 April 1969.

INGEBORG TAVONIUS
Xray Technician
(1901? - 1969)

Ingeborg Tavonius was born in Muntau, Molotschna, probably 1901 or 1902. She was the eldest of four daughters of Dr Erich Tavonius and Margarethe Baumann, who were married in 1900. She likely trained as an Xray technician in Germany. She helped her father install Xray equipment in the Muntau Hospital, probably 1910 or 1911.

Dr Tavonius and girls at the table. Ingeborg farthest to the left. Family dog Muschka under the table

Ingeborg later worked as a technician in a German Hospital in Simferopol, then in 1938 she was working in Sevastopol, where her sister Erika and Erika's son Rudolf joined her.

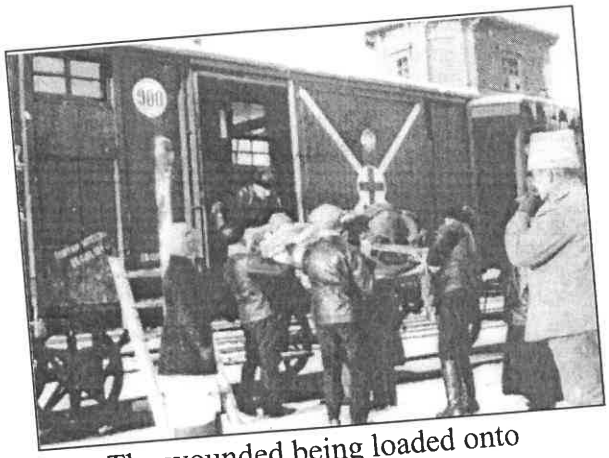
Ingeborg was married, and in 1938 her husband was in the Russian navy, likely based in Sevastopol. In 1939 her hospital was moved, so she also had to move out of Sevastopol.

Ingeborg probably stayed in the Crimea for the rest of her life. She died in Yalta, Crimea, in 1969.

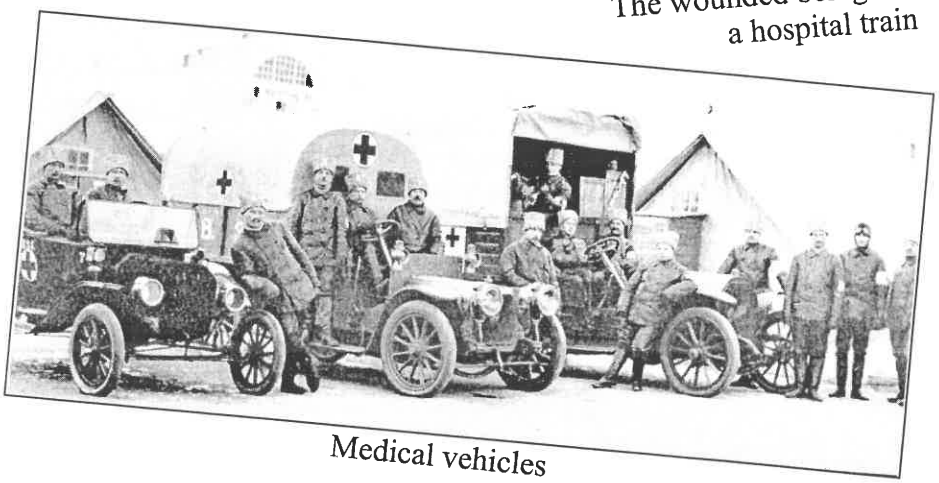
Sources:
The Tavonius Family, Astrid Koop, Vineland, Ontario 1996

VI
MEDICAL ORDERLY SERVICE (SANITAETSDIENST)

Heinrich, Peter and Gerhard Funk
Medical Orderlies (*Sanitaeter*)



The wounded being loaded onto a hospital train



Medical vehicles

MEDICAL CORPS ALTERNATIVE SERVICE
(*SANITAETSDIENST*)

After the humiliating defeat in the Crimean War (1853-1856), the Russian government set about to analyze the reasons, particularly as they related to the organization and strength of the military. One feature which came to its attention was that too many potentially good soldiers were excused from service, for whatever reasons. Many of the wealthy could simply buy their way out. Others had special privileges, such as religious objections. By 1870 the government was moving in the direction of universal service.

In1874 a new military law of universal conscription was enacted to enforce this principle. Mennonites became aware of this law, since it would certainly effect their lives. A considerable number felt that impingement of any kind on their nonresistant status was unacceptable. About one third of them, 18,000, emigrated to Canada and the United States. Those remaining in Russia felt that some accommodation could be worked out. It is a peculiar irony that those who entered the United States did so without any official assurance that they would not have to serve in the military. Canada definitely did guarantee exemption, but then the climate in Manitoba was so much colder. It seems that the principle of guaranteed exemption from the military played only a secondary role in the United States when it concerned dealing with a more moderate climate.

In Mennonite discussions with the Russian government various types of alternative service were considered. Forestry work (*Forsteidienst*) seemed, to the Mennonite leadership, to be the most acceptable. The camps were to be close to the Mennonite colonies, and the men were to work in groups, both factors would help the ministers to keep a careful eye on proceedings.

The *Forsteidienst* actually began in 1880, with 1,000 men being drafted. In short order there were eight forestry camps in southern Ukraine as well as one phylloxera station to combat disease in the grape crop of the Crimea. In 1913 an additional camp was established at Issyl Kul on the Trans Siberian Railway. All camps were financed by the Mennonites. Terms of service were four years, although this was later reduced to three.

Gradually, over the years, it was deemed possible that non-combatant medical service could also be used to serve the mother country, particularly in time of war. At first there were certainly those in the religious hierarchy who felt uncomfortable with this idea, but eventually most Mennonites enthusiastically embraced this form of service.

It is interesting that the theology of medial service is discussed in detail, the methods of calling up are outlined, the costs are analyzed, and the numbers of people involved are carefully calculated, but in most reports there is very little discussion as to what these medical volunteers or recruits were taught in their training programs. It is only obliquely mentioned as to what they actually did when they were serving. For example, did the orderlies assigned to the trains sit on the trains and wait for the wounded to stumble in, or did they go out onto the field of battle, on site resuscitate casualties, and then on stretchers carry them to the trains? I suspect that this is what happened, but there is scant mention of what, in the final analysis, was the really important part of the story! Also not mentioned in the reports is the fact that the actual medical treatment of casualties was not carried out by the Mennonite orderlies, but by Russian nurses. This is not mentioned, but the photographs of the trains make this obvious.

CRIMEAN WAR (1853-1856)

During the Crimean War Mennonites had been forced (or strongly urged) to help in the transport of materials across south Russia to the war zone. They had also accepted that they should help to care for the families of the troops. Mennonites were also very willing to care for the wounded soldiers, both in hospitals and in their own homes.

RUSSO - TURKISH WAR (1877-1878)

During the Russo-Turkish War Mennonites wondered how they could best help their Russian homeland. From October 1877 to March 1878 the Halbstadt Volost operated a field hospital, 100 bed capacity, handling 174 wounded and sick Russian soldiers. The Gnadenfeld Volost had a similar field hospital. Chortitza had a hospital with 20 bed capacity, and handled 487 patients. The colonies covered all the expenses of these facilities.

RUSSO - JAPANESE WAR (8 February 1904 to 5 September 1905)

In the Russo-Japanese War Abram Kroeker, editor of the Mennonite newspaper *Friedensstimme*, felt that "when the fatherland is in danger, then all groups and nationalities stand together...everywhere in the country people are expressing willingness to sacrifice for the czar's realm." With this "propaganda" in mind it is small wonder that there were volunteers to go to the front - non-combatant, but front-line. When the volunteers for medical services proved to be conscientious and hard-working, the government sought to obtain more Mennonite stretcher bearers.

Mennonites contributed hundreds of thousands of rubles to help finance the war. They also supplied hospital trains with food, warm clothing, underwear and bandages. The Molotschna supported a Taurian field hospital, and Chortitza a similar hospital from Ekaterinoslav District..

There were also somewhat over 50 men who volunteered directly. Most had originally been in the Forestry Service, then transferred to the Medical Service. In those instances where the war ended before their terms had expired, the men then had to complete their time in the Forestry.

Germany sent a Field Hospital Unit to the Russian front as a token of friendship. Mennonites, with knowledge of both German and Russian, often served in this unit. A group of seven men left early in November 1904, 22 received a posting in March of 1905. Since the "stretcher bearers" were considered to be brave, some of the men must actually have been working out on the battle fields. Three or four died, having come in contact with infectious diseases, likely typhus.

Dr Nikolai Friesen, a volunteer from Tiege, is said to have died in Manchuria from exhaustion. Dr Theodor Hottmann, physician at the Chortitza Hospital, also volunteered for the war, and was captured and imprisoned in Port Arthur in 1905. He was released at the conclusion of the war and returned to work at the Chortitza Hospita.

Jakob Penner served as a male nurse, then had to serve in the same capacity for several years during World War I. Peter Dyck was another such volunteer, as well as Franz Thiessen, a Mr Froese and a Mr Loewen.

WORLD WAR I (1914-1917)

Men called up for alternative service during World War I were given the choice of forestry or medical service. Those joining the medical service could join these private services:

1. All-Russian Union of Zemstvos, based in Moscow, which took over the management of most

of the hospital trains, 3,500-4,000 Mennonites joined this union, by 1915 running 50 hospital trains, and by 1917 about 75. Moscow manager was Armin Lehn, under the supervision of Boris Nikolajevitsch Saltykov

2. All-Russian Union of Cities
3. The United Council of the Nobility
4. Red Cross, largely in South Russia; while called "Red Cross" it was not actually affiliated with the International Red Cross based n Geneva
5. A few small private agencies

The government and Mennonites, in all of these agencies, shared the costs of maintaining the medical service.

Uniforms for the medical orderlies were khaki pants, black leather jackets with a Red Cross emblem and the letters VZS on a white cloth strip on the left sleeve, black leather cap with ear-flaps and a regular military cap with a small Red Cross emblem fastened to its front. The uniform gave rise to some jealousy, being considered to be more elegant than the ordinary army uniform.

With the outbreak of World War I on 1 August 1914, all of the alternative services were expanded to include medical orderly (*Sanitaetsdienst*), road building, additional forestry duties and other services. Initially volunteers were called for, and Mennonites responded. Elder Heinrich Unruh of the Halbstadt Mennonite Church wrote "Go with God, wherever duty will call you, and spend all your energy, and if called upon, your life, in this holy service." By 19 August 1914 over 400 young men had volunteered as medical orderlies. In late August there were 51 Mennonite medical orderlies in Simferopol as well as five nurses from the Muntau Hospital. They were preparing the local hospital to receive three to four hundred casualties in the next few days.

The general organization of the medical service was divided into southern and northern sections. Headquarters of the southern section was based in Ekaterinoslav, with the office and training center being located there. After the training sessions the recruits were then assigned to specific areas. Johann Esau, mayor of Ekaterinoslav, was in charge of this section. The northern section was based in Moscow, with a similar function.

On 25 August 1914 a telegram was received in Halbstadt, and presumably in all volost headquarters, that a universal draft was to be implemented. All reservists born 1896 or earlier, up to the age of 43, were to report to Ekaterinoslav by 2 September. Farewells were said in Gnadenfeld and Halbstadt as 700 to 800 reservists headed toward Ekaterinoslav. On 2 September most of these reservists were assigned to be medical orderlies.

By 1 March 1915 a total of 3,093 Mennonites were serving as medical orderlies, increasing to 6,548 by 1916. In all, about 14,000 Mennonite men were mobilized, of which 7,000 were medical orderlies, a few hundred built roads, and the majority of the others served in forestry camps. Women were not actively conscripted, but as mentioned, a number of nurses from the Mennonite hospitals participated in the medical care of the wounded.

The medical work varied considerably. Many orderlies worked on trains which often were very near the active fighting. Seventy medical trains were staffed largely by Mennonite orderlies, 40-60 per train. One train with Mennonite orderlies, No 189, fell into German hands near Wirballen. There were 39 Mennonite orderlies on board. One died, two eventually escaped, while the remaining 36 were in time exchanged back to Russia in three groups. There they under suspicion for some time as being German spies. Eventually, with a the change in government, they were released. Abram

Penner was captured by the Austrians, and as prisoner even worked in an Austrian military field hospital. He eventually escaped back to Russia. Many orderlies also worked in field hospitals and military hospitals which took care of the wounded well behind the front lines, having been brought there by the trains. Some orderlies had largely administrative functions, such as at the Moscow and Ekaterinoslav offices of the Medical Corps.

Three hospital ships on the Black Sea had Mennonite medical orderlies on board, about ten Mennonites per ship. They were the "Athena," "Portugal" and the "Equator." Their function was to ferry wounded soldiers to appropriate facilities on shore. The general understanding between the German and the Russian fleets appeared to be that hospital ships would not be attacked. The "Athena" had a capacity of 1,600 beds. Medical personnel consisted of two doctors, 12 nurses, 50 Russian and ten Mennonite orderlies. Paul Esau, son of Johann Esau, the mayor of Ekaterinoslav, was the paymaster. A number of the other administrative positions on board were also manned by Mennonites. The "Portugal" with a capacity of 1,800 beds, and 13 Mennonite orderlies on board, was torpedoed on 17 March 1916, with considerable loss of life. This may well have been because the captain refused to get rid of his radio apparatus Most of the crew and passengers were rescued, but two Mennonite orderlies, Peter Klassen from Nikolyevka and Peter Koehn from Volhynia, originally from Sagradovka, were drowned. The "Equator" with 1,600 bed capacity, was asked to take over some of the function previously handled by the "Portugal". Eventually it was felt safer to send the casualties by land, although the distances may have been farther.

Since much of the medical orderly service was near the front, there were casualties, about 125 deaths, as well as deaths from diseases such as typhus.

1917 AND BEYOND

During the Russian Revolution and the subsequent Civil War there was no such status as "alternative service." The anarchists such as Makhno certainly honored nothing of the kind. The Red and White Armies may have had emergency medical personnel, but no special arrangements with the Mennonites. Actually a considerable number of Mennonite young men joined the combat divisions of the White Army.

When conditions stabilized, with the eventual victory of the Red Army, Mennonite leaders began negotiations for alternative service with the Communist government. Mennonite young men were being drafted into the Red Army in considerable numbers, stimulating intense interest in the situation. Probably the first significant conference to deal with the subject was held in Alexanderwohl, Molotschna, in February of 1921. Delegates were concerned with obtaining the release of Mennonite young men from military service, but also passed a resolution reaffirming the principle of nonresistance. There were some isolated instances in 1922 and 1923, where through effective representation, young men were able yo avoid direct military service. Kornelius K Martens made a number of effective appeals on the behalf of young men.

From that time on, largely through the work of Peter F Froese, C F Klassen and B B Janz, a whole series of meetings was held, and a number of mutually acceptable agreements were almost made. Almost, but something invariably cropped up to prevent final agreement. While in Moscow in November 1922, B B Janz found Krassikov, of the Commissariative of Justice "not adverse to an alternative service program...favoured Mennonite participation in some noncombatant medical unit within the army." During this time of negotiations, imprisonment and forced labour for refusing

military induction were frequent. Existing laws protecting conscientious objectors were unevenly applied or simply ignored.

The new military law was passed 18 September 1925. Exemption from military service was solely at the discretion of the district courts. Revisions to the law in 1928 and 1930 did nothing to alleviate the frequent discrepancies. Realistically, exemption from military service of any kind was difficult and virtually unheard of after 1928. When Stalin brought in his new constitution in 1936 exemptions were no longer available.

Sources:

Epp, George K, *Geschichte der Mennoniten in Russland, Band III*, Logos Verlag. 1996, *Der Ersatzdienst*, pp 163-205

Huebert, Helmut T, *Kornelius Martens; Our Skillful Advocate*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, pp 8, 10

Huebert, Helmut T, *Events and People*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1999, pp 148, 149

Klippenstein, Lawrence, *Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia: 1789-1935* , Doctoral Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1984, many pages

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, p 135

Reimer, Al, Sanitaetsdienst and Selbstschutz: Russian-Mennonite Nonresistance in World War I and its Aftermath, *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, Vol 11, 1993, pp 135-148

Rempel, David G, Mennonite Medics in Russia During World War I, *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, Vol11, 1993, pp 149-161

Rempel, Jakob J, *Consider the Threshing Stone*, Writings of Jakob J Rempel, translated by David J Rempel Smucker and Eleanore (Rempel) Woollard, Pandora Press, 2008, pp 45-63

Toews, Aron A *Mennonitische Maertyrer*, Vol 1, Self Published, Winnipeg, Canada, 1949, p 210

Toews, John B, *Czars, Soviets & Mennonites*, Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, pp 95-106

MEDICAL CORPS VOLUNTEER LIST
(*SANITAETER*)

Andres, Heinrich - teacher, medical orderly during World War I, one of three delegates sent to Petrograd by the Council of Mennonite Mobilized Men of Ekaterinoslav to help free the 36 *Sanitaeter* prisoners

Braun Heinrich - likely from Chortitza, assigned to the Kara-Kalissa Field Hospital on the Russo-Turkish front, was one of the secretaries

Braun, Johann Johann - (1887-1963), drafted into Medical Corps in 1916, where he served to the end of World War I, then went to help in Chortitza in the medical field

Dahl, Johann - from Kronsweide, served as medical orderly on the hospital ship "Portugal," it was sunk by a submarine on 17 March 1916, but Johann Dahl survived

Derksen, J - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Dick, Heinrich - likely drafted in March 1915, probably worked in a field hospital in Caucasus, then Crimea, then on ships, helped friend Woldemar Guenther when he had typhus

Dick, Johann - joined Train No 192 in December 1915, with Jakob Reimer, loaded wounded 24 December, then took them to Moscow, trips usually 2-3 days, capacity of the train was 369, but often carried up to 600, especially busy was the summer of 1916

Dirks, Peter Peter - from Gnadenfeld, teacher, *Forstei*, then *Sanitaeter* based in Moscow, in charge of a hospital train for two years, later a physician (bacteriologist)

Dirks, Wilhelm Peter - drafted 1915, later studied medicine, as a result of the inspiration

Driediger, Abram - served as *Sanitaeter* in 1915

Dueck, Johann - drafted June 1915, originally to Bachmut, then Moscow, then to a hospital for infectious diseases in Chodyn

Duerksen, J - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Dyck, Abram - served in Medical Corps in 1915

Dyck, Abram - in the Forestry Service 1912-1914, then Medical Corps based in Moscow, then served on Medical Train No 208 in the Caucasus region until 1917

Dyck, Abram Peter - from Tiege, Sagradovka, served in the Medical Corps during World War I, murdered in 1919, leaving a widow and child

Dyck, Arnold (later writer) - appointed business manager for the southern division of the Medical Corps based in Ekaterinoslav

Dyck, F A - Neuhorst, Chortitza, drafted May 1915, eventually to Moscow, February 1916 assigned to Hospital Train No 198, furious battle, many wounded, had to wash them and put them into clean clothing

Dyck, Gerhard H - drafted April 1915, served as *Sanitaeter* , first assigned to hospital ship "Portugal" on the Black Sea, then in three days transferred to "Equator," "Portugal" was later sunk.

Dyck, Isaak Johann - from Terek, father was a minister, had been in the *Forstei*, to the Kara-Kilissa Field Hospital on the Russian -Turkish front, where he was second in charge

Dyck, J J - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Dyck, Jakob J - originally from estate in Crimea, worker in Moscow Medical Corps office during

World War I, March 1917 during Kerensky time was one of the founders of the "Christian Soldiers" Union, asked for tents from the Corps to start evangelistic meetings, one of the founders of the Tent Mission, eventually murdered by anarchists

Dyck, Peter - volunteered for medical work during the Russo-Japanese War, worked with the German Military Hospital, which had been sent by Germany as a sign of friendship

Ediger - from Millerovo, organized Hospital Train No 168, first trip being to Fortress Ivangorod

Eitzen - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Enns. H H - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Enns, Hermann- Samoojlovka, Ekaterinoslav, served as medical orderly on Hospital Train No 206, together with brother Jakob

Enns, Jakob - Samojlovka, Ekaterinoslav, served as medical orderly on Hospital Train No 206, together with brother Hermann

Enns, Johann (Hans) - Samojlovka, Ekaterinoslav, served as medical orderly in a hospital in Simferopol, which treated tuberculosis

Enns, P - *Sanitaeter* in the hospital in Chortitza in 1915

Enns, W H - Samojlovka, Ekaterinoslav, drafted June 1915, originally to Bachmut, then Moscow, then to a hospital for infectious diseases in Chodyn

Epp, David C - from Rosenhof, Ekaterinoslav Volost, drafted March 1916, to Moscow to a physiotherapy institution, dealt especially with surgical cases with fractured bones, provided frames, crutches and other helps, discharged December 1918

Epp, D H - *Sanitaeter* in the hospital in Chortitza in 1915

Epp, H H - *Sanitaeter* in the hospital in Chortitza in 1915

Epp, P - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Esau, Paul - son of Johann Esau, industrialist and mayor of Ekaterinoslav, graduated from chemistry in Riga in 1916, then into Medical Corps where he served as paymaster on the hospital ship "Athena", then after the war continued studies in Germany in 1918, then to USA with family in 1924

Fast, M - author of poem about the medical service, "*Meinen Bruedern*" (To my Brothers) published in *Botschafter* 1914

Fast, Nicholai - son of Johann Fast of the Kuban, died of typhus as a *sanitaeter* on the Romanian front

Foth, Jakob Tobias - from Neu-Samara, assigned to the Kara-Kalissa Field Hospital on the Russo-Turkish front, was the secretary

Friesen, Gerhard - from Halbstadt, Molotschna, drafted autumn1914,assigned to Hospital Train No 190, based in Moscow

Friesen, Nikolai (Nicolaus) - from Tiege, doctor, volunteered, worked during the Russo-Japanese War; said to have died of exhaustion

Friesen, Paul - son of P M Friesen, born about 1887, served during World War I

Friesen, Peter - first voluteered for *Forstei*, then found it boring, then to Moscow to join the *Sanitaetsdienst*, put onto Hospital Train No 190, picked up 300-400 wounded in Warsaw region and transported them to Moscow or Petersburg

Froese - medical volunteer during the Russo-Japanese War

Froese, Peter - medical orderly who represented the *Sanitaeter* at the All-Mennonite Congress

at Ohrloff on 14-18 August 1917, they were asking for fairly radical reforms

Funk, Gerhard - one of three brothers who were in the *Sanitaetsdienst* in 1915

Funk, H - *Sanitaeter* in the hospital in Chortitza in 1915

Funk, Heinrich - one of three brothers who were in the *Sanitaetsdienst* in 1915

Funk, Peter - one of three brothers who were in the *Sanitaetsdienst* in 1915

Giesbrecht, P - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Giesbrecht, Peter J - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna, one of the 39 orderlies captured by the German forces on Train No 189 in 1915, eventually exchanged back to Russia spring of 1917, later reported his experiences

Goerzen, Peter - in the group of 39 *Sanitaeter* captured with Hospital Train No 189, since he was a minister, he performed the funeral for Koop who died during the imprisonment

Goossen, Dietrich J - *Zentralschullehrer* from Orenburg, who was an officer in the *Sanitaetsdienst*

Guenther, Johann - from Eichenfeld, 1914 volunteer to Moscow, where he was assigned to Train No 175, after holidays went to Odessa, there onto hospital ship "Portuagal." It was sunk by a German submarine on 17 March 1916, Johann survived. Thereafter he transferred to the hospital ship "Athena"

Guenther, Woldemar - from Ohrloff, Molotschna, likely drafted in March 1915, he and 4 other Mennonite orderlies worked in a field hospital in the Caucasus, then to the Crimea, where they were fighting Austrians and Hungarians, then transferred to ships, car driver in Sevastopol

Harder, Gerhard - served in Medical Corps during World War I

Harder, Jakob - from Sagradovka, served on Medical Corps train during World War I

Hoemsen, Jakob - originally participated in the Russo-Japanese War, mobilized 1 September 1914 and eventually assigned to Hospital Train No 168, organized by an Ediger from Millerovo

Hottmann, Theodor - physician at the Chortitza Hospital, volunteered service for the Russo-Japanese War. He was captured and imprisoned in Port Arthur. He was released at the conclusion of the war and returned to work at the Chortitza Hospital

Isaak, Cornelius - served as *Sanitaeter* during World War I

Isaak, Johann P - served as *Sanitaeter* during World War I

Janzen - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Janzen, Gerhard - from Melitopol, volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* the first day of World War I

Janzen, J - worked in a field hospital on the Turkish front

Janzen, Jakob - from Ignatyevo, originally participated in the Russo-Japanese War, mobilized 1 September 1914 and eventually assigned to Hospital Train No 168, organized by an Ediger from Millerovo

Klassen, A - from Melitopol, volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* the first day of World War I

Klassen, Franz - together with his father Kornelius and brother Johann (Hans), served in the Medical Corps

Klassen Johann (Hans) - together with his father Kornelius and his brother Franz, served in the Medical Corps

Klassen, Kornelius - together with his two sons, Franz and Johann (Hans), served in the Medical Corps

Klassen, Peter - from Nikolayevka, served as *Sanitaeter* on the hospital ship "Portugal" on the Black

Sea. It was sunk by a submarine 17 March 1916, and Klassen was drowned

Klassen, P J - worked in the Moscow office of the *Sanitaetsdienst*

Klassen, W P - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Koehn, Peter - from Volhynia, served as *Sanitaeter* on the hospital ship "Portugal" on the Black Sea, it was sunk by a submarine 17 March 1916, and Koehn was drowned

Koop - from Sagradovka, served as orderly on medical train No189, captured by Germans in 1915, died in Germany, age 19

K - from Paulsheim, Molotschna, one of the 39 medical orderlies of Train No 189, captured by the German military in 1915, he and another orderly, J Kroeker escaped, then via Denmark back to Russia

Krahn, Jacob B - from Grigorjevka, served in Medical Corps during World War I

Krahn, Mr - served in Medical Service, had wife and five young children

Kroeker, Heinrich - from Terek, on the Turkish front, worked in a field hospital

Kroeker, J - from Neukirch, Molotschna, one of the 39 medical orderlies of Train No 189, captured by the German military in 1915, he and another orderly, "K" escaped, then via Denmark back to Russia

Lehn, Armin - from Chortitza, Chief of the Medical Corps office in Moscow during World War I

Lehn, Isaak - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Letkemann, David - served as medical orderly during World War I on Train No 190

Loewen, A J - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Loewen - worker in the Moscow Medical Corps office during World War I

Loewen - medical volunteer during the Russo-Japanese War

Martens, Abraham Kornelius (1888-1941?), first served in *Forsteidienst* about 1910-1914, then when war broke out switched to the *Sanitaetsdienst*, medical orderly on trains, son of Kornelius Johann Martens and Helena Wolf

Martens, Jakob Kornelius - (1886-1934), served on trains in Medical Corps, likely1914-1917 son of Kornelius Johann Martens and Helena Wolf

Neufeld, David - from Gnadenfeld, Molotschna , teacher, foreman and one of the chief instructors of the medical orderlies, one of the 39 orderlies captured by the German forces on Train No 189 in 1915, eventually exchanged back to Russia spring of 1917, his report published later in 1917

Neufeld, Johann - *Sanitaeter* working on a medical train during World War I

Neumann, R - member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Nickel, A - from Rudnerweide, first voluteered for *Forstei*, found it boring, then to Moscow to join the *Sanitaetsdienst*, put onto Hospital Train No 190, picked up 300-400 wounded in Warsaw region and transported them to Moscow or Petersburg

Pauls, J - cook on Hospital Train No 189, which was captured by German Forces in 1915

Penner, Abram - initially in Moscow, then to Hospital train No 120 in the Caucasus, then to Western Front where he was captured by the Austrians, as prisoner worked in Austrian Military Field Hospital, escaped to Russia

Peters, H A - from Chortitza Colony, to the Kara-Kilissa Field Hospital on the Russian-Turkish front in February 1916

Peters, Wilhelm (Willi) A - from Chortitza Colony, to the Kara-Kilissa Field Hospital on the

Russian -Turkish front, where he was one of the head officials

Pries, Mr - *Sanitaeter* in the hospital in Chortitza in 1915

Redekopp, P D - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Reimer, D - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Rempel, Jakob - *Sanitaeter* working on a medical train during World War I

Rempel, J G - *Sanitaeter* on the Galacian front

Rempel, Jakob J - from Brasol, Schoenfeld Volost, drafted April 1915, served as *Sanitaeter* , first assigned to hospital ship "Portugal" on the Black Sea, then in three days transferred to "Equator," "Portugal" was later sunk.

Reimer - cook on Hospital Train No 189, which was captured by German Forces in 1915

Reimer, Jakob - joined Train No 192 in December 1915, with Johann Dick, loaded wounded 24 December, then took them to Moscow, trips usually 2-3 days, capacity of the train was 369, but often carried up to 600, especially busy was the summer of 1916

Sawatzky, B - from Tiegerweide, in the ASV

Sawatzky, Peter - medical orderly during World War I, one of three representatives sent to Petrograd in attempt to free the 36 captured medical orderlies

Sawatzky, Gerhard - teacher, medical orderly during World War I, one of three delegates sent to Petrograd by the Council of Mennonite Mobilized Men of Ekaterinoslav to help free the 36 *Sanitaeter* prisoners

Schmidt. T - during World War I served in the Medical Corps

Thiessen, Franz - medical volunteer during the Russo-Japanese War

Thiessen, Franz Peter - from Chortitza, arrived at the Moscow headquarters of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos in August 1914 with the first group of Mennonites, and remained with it in various assignments until late summer or early autumn 1917

Thiessen, Gerhard J - drafted April 1915, served as *Sanitaeter* , first assigned to hospital ship "Portugal" on the Black Sea, then in three days transferred to "Equator," "Portugal" was later sunk.

Toews, Aron Peter - probably one of the 39 medical orderlies captured by the German forces in 1915, was exchanged in the spring of 1917, was one of the men who tried to obtain the release of the orderlies, dealing with the government in 1917

Toews, B I - *Sanitaeter* in the hospital in Chortitza in 1915

Toews, D - from Orenburg, member of the First Division of the Kaukasus Field Hospital

Toews, Jakob - wife Agatha Konrad, 2 children, in Medical Corps stationed in Moscow likely about 1916

Unger, Abraham - from Halbstadt, Slavgorod, drafted into the Medical Corps about 1916

Unger , Jacob - from Halbstadt, Slavgorod, drafted into the Medical Corps 1914 at the age of 21

Unger, Johann - from Halbstadt, Slavgorod, drafted into the medical Corps in 1914, at the age of 16, foot hurt by a train wheel, hospitalized

Vogt, J P - worked in the Moscow office of the *Sanitaetsdienst*, was *Buerochef*

Von Kampen, Julius - from Choritza, was in Medical Corps in Moscow during World War I, studied at the University of Moscow, Law, practiced as lawyer in Alexandrovsk

Wall, Cornelius - likely drafted in March 1915, probably worked in a field hospital in Caucasus, then Crimea, then on ships, helped friend Woldemar Guenther when he had typhus

Wallmann, Peter - from Melitopol, volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* the first day of World War I
Warkentin, Jakob Jr - from Melitopol, volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* the first day of World War I
Warkentin, Johann - served as *Sanitaeter* during World War I
Warkentin, Wilhelm - served as *Sanitaeter* during World War I
Wiebe, Peter J - from Gussarovka, Kharkov, first assigned forestry duty, with others petitioned for medical duty, November 1914 assigned to hospital train headquarters in Moscow, where he remained as secretary until the Communist takeover in November 1917
Wiens, Abram - served in Medical Corps in 1915
Wiens, Heinz - served in Medical Corps in 1915
Wiens, Nikolai - served in the Medical Corps in 1915
Willms, David - from Melitopol, volunteered for *Sanitaetsdienst* the first day of World War I
Wolff, J - from Osterwick, Chortitza, author of poem "*Twee Kameroden*" (Two Comrades), about his experience as medic

Russo-Japanese War

Dr Theodor Hottmann
Prisoner during Russo-Japanese War

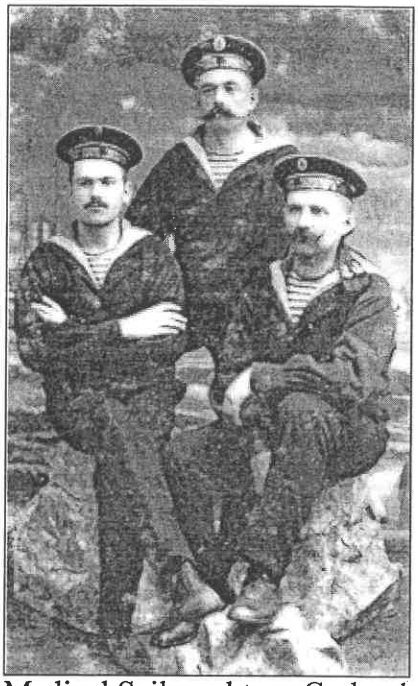
Dr Nicolaus Friesen, volunteer in Russo-Japanese War.

Mennonite volunteers with the German hospital in the Russo-Japanese War. Peter Dyck on the right

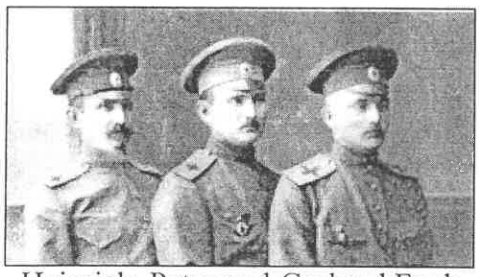
Jakob Penner, male nurse in Russo-Japanese War and also in World War I

Russo-Japanese War volunteers. l to r: Froese, Loewen, Russian nurse, Franz Thiessen

The Klassen family, son Franz, father Kornelius and son Hans, all in the Medical Corps



Medical Sailors: l to r, Gerhard Dyck, Gerhard J Thiessen and Jakob J Rempel

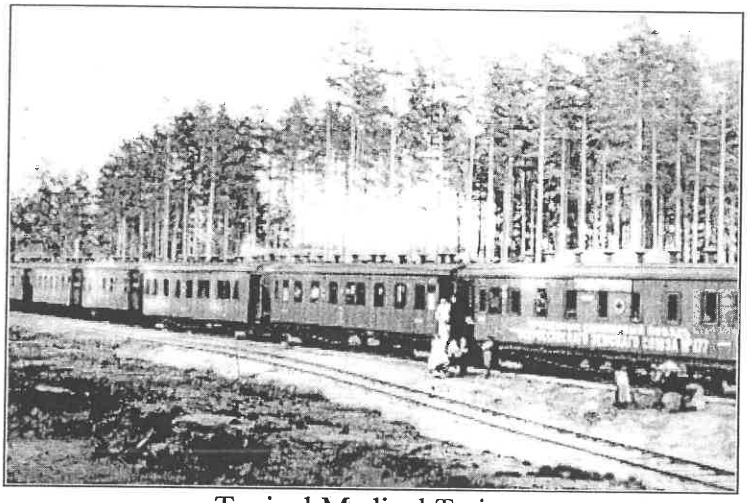


Heinrich, Peter and Gerhard Funk Medical Orderlies (*Sanitaeter*)

David Neufeld *Sanitaeter* in 1915

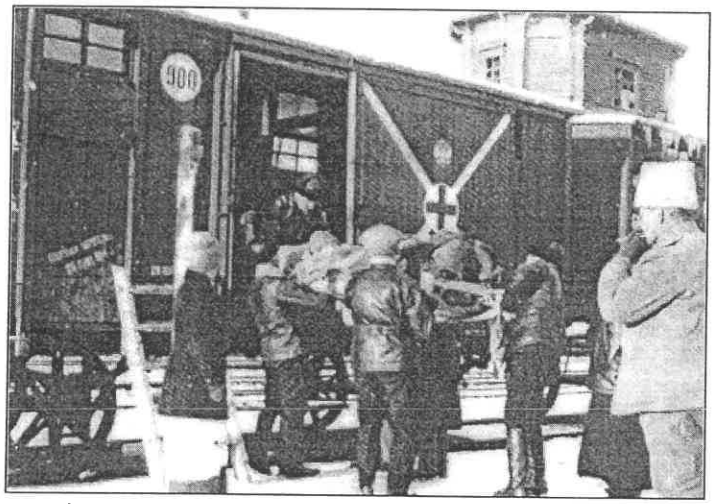
Medical Corps in Simferopol 1915. Front row l to r, Anna Wiens, Anna Dyck, the next nurse Helena Kroeker, then Abram Friesen

The Hospital Trains

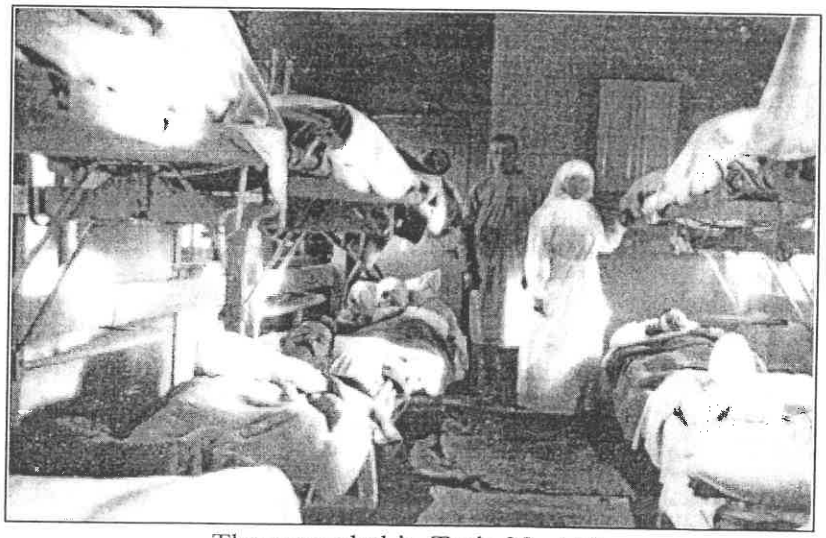


Typical Medical Train

Medical train with Russian nurses and Mennonite orderlies

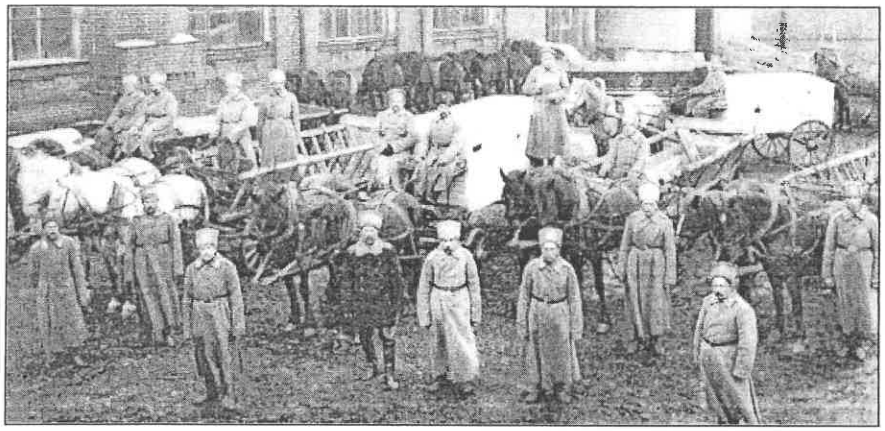


The wounded being loaded onto a hospital train

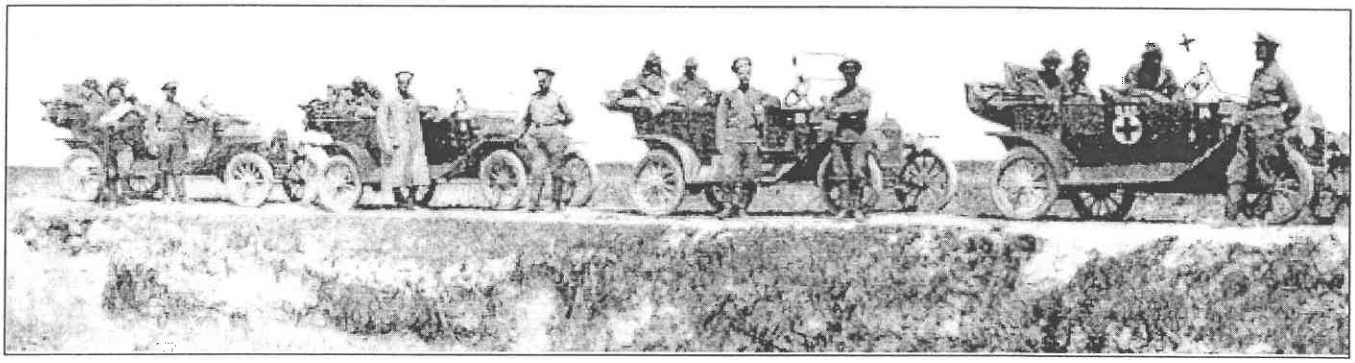


The wounded in Train No 196

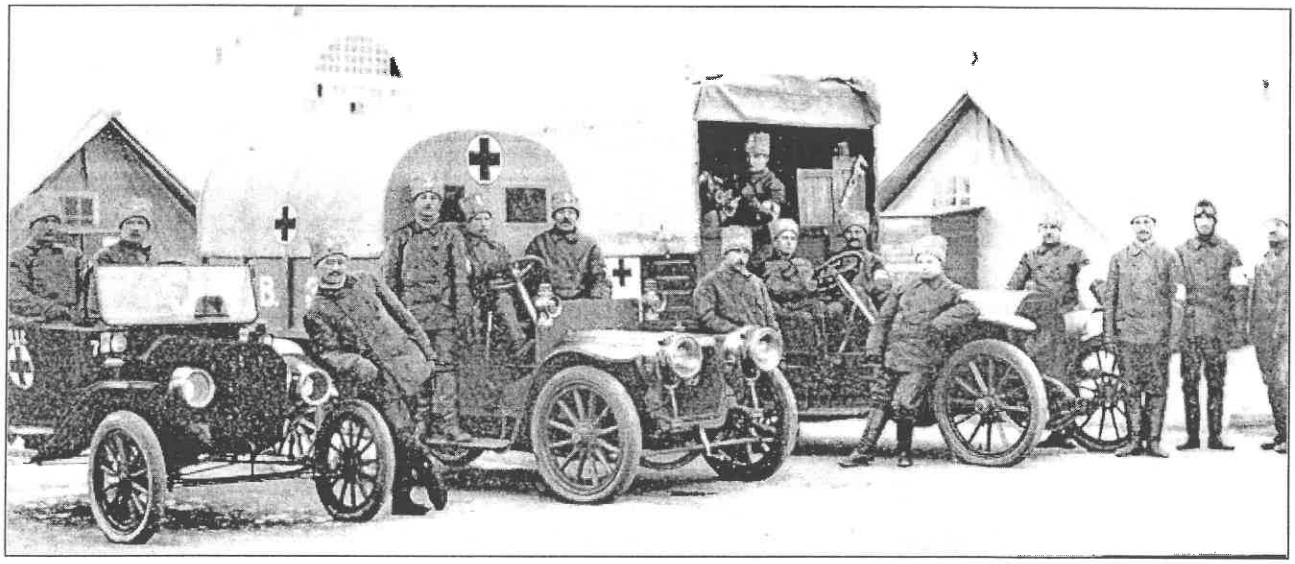
Medical Vehicles



Medical Horse Stretchers



Medical vehicles on the Caucasus front



Medical vehicles

VII

BONE-SETTERS

AND

OTHERS

BONE- SETTERS LIST

(*KNOCHENARZT*)

(asterisk* signifies that there is a more detailed biography)

In this category we include individuals who treated people in all kinds of ways, but themselves had no legitimate medical training. A number had some actual medical training, but by and large did not follow scientific treatment methods. Some of them manipulated fractures and other injuries, and seemed to have had at least a very superficial knowledge of anatomy; they undoubtedly did help some people. Others were clearly "*Wunder Oel*" factories, and treated everyone the same way, regardless of what was wrong, and with the same methods, whether there was anything wrong with them or not.

Dick, Dietrich - of Hoffnungsfeld, manipulated a fractured arm, broken in two places, about 1860

Hiebert, Abraham B* - lived 1847-1914, nephew of Dietrich Hildebrand of Burwalde; probably received training by him; some training in USA; to Canada in the 1870s

Hildebrand, Dietrich - well known "doctor" in Burwalde, Chortitza Colony
Lived 1824 - November1902.
Father of Gerhard D Hildebrand
On 9 April1862 an overturned wagon caused multiple injuries to the passengers. The accident had occurred somewhere in the Molotschna, and was caused by a drunk driver. Two villagers fetched "Dr Hildebrand" and he adjusted the dislocations and the damaged bones
Probably trained Abram Hiebert, who was his nephew

Hildebrand, Gerhard D* - born 1859, lived his whole life in Burwalde, Chortitza Colony took over his father's bone-setting practice when he died in 1902. No official training Gerhard died in1929

Hildebrandt, Dietrich* - in 1904 Dietrich and wife Mathilda studied in Germany, she took midwifery, he naturopathic and herbal medicine, to Rosthern, then in 1935 to Yarrow, where Dietrich continued his practice

Olfert - friend of Jakob Epp, Chortitza Colony, worked in 1868, practiced blood-letting as a treatment, and draining abscesses

Kampen Peter von - colony administrator, ordered a machine from Germany, "*Lebenswecker*" designed by Karl Braunscheidt, used for a broad range of ailments: infected eyes, boils, cataract, cholera, chest ailments and rheumatism. Apparently strapped to the body. When Peter was not available, his wife would use it. Machine described in Germany as "*Naturheilkunde*"

Schellenberg, Bernhard Paul*(see biography under doctor heading) - of Rosenthal, no specific evidence of medical training, considered to be a "consultant," in cases involving infected eyes, severe fevers, blood poisoning, broken bones. Used bleeding, purgatives, some manipulation, and especially known for his herbs, which he gathered from a spot on the Dniepr River.
February 1863 diagnosed woman with consumption (tuberculosis) and pregnancy

It should be realized that at that time bleeding and purgatives were standard medical treatment

Thiessen, Katharina (nee Born)*(see biography under midwife heading) - born 1842 in Fuerstenau, some training in Germany in midwifery, manipulative and naturopathic medicine, married Abraham Thiessen, to Hillsboro, Kansas, then to Manitoba, where she continued her practice, additional training in Cincinnati, did not get Canadian licence, stopped practice after court decision

Wiebe, Dietrich Sr* - "bone setter Wiebe" or "Lichtfelder Wiebe," from Lichtfelde, Molotschna
Had a good reputation among Mennonites, Russians and Bulgarians.
Did manipulations and treated many conditions with "salve and oil"
Patient kicked by a horse was taken to Wiebe, who fixed his shoulder
His skills in manipulation were widely respected
On 1 October1860 a Mrs Gaeddert tore open her finger "up to the joint." A few days later her husband expressed some pus out of the wound. Probably treated with the standard "salve and oil."
The "salve and oil" was prescribed for a wide variety of ailments, even into the twentieth century, including "shrinking" of the normally oversized heads of infants
- Died about 1903

Wiebe, Dietrich Dietrich Jr - after the death of Dietrich Sr in 1903 followed in his footsteps.
Popular
Saw people on Tuesdays and Fridays, often 150 or more a day, people were given numbers, some even came the day before to get a low number
It was remarked that "everybody went away satisfied...a small bottle of "*Wieben Oel*" or "*Neunerlei Oel*" did wonders!" Many mothers, concerned that their infants had enlarged heads, were given this magic potion, and used correctly, it was promised that the children would improve. It should be noted that infants normally have heads which look enlarged, and with growth this seeming disproportion disappears without any treatment.

Wiebe, Jakob "Jasch" (son of Dietrich Wiebe Jr) - bone setter also based in Lichtfelde
Had a flourishing practice in Lichtfelde
In 1929 was forced to flee to Melitopol
Said to have been challenged by the local doctors, but seems to have passed their test
Soon fled to the Caucasus, where three of his brothers had already gathered
Arrested and sentenced to ten years in exile. Did not survive

ABRAHAM B HIEBERT

Abraham B Hiebert was born 23 August 1847 in Burwalde, Chortitza Colony. His parents were Abraham A Hiebert and Anna Hildebrand. The family continued to live in Burwalde. In 1869 Abraham married Sara Loewen, who was born 30 March 1848. Her parents were Franz Loewen and Agatha Krahn. Abraham may have obtained some medical training from his uncle, Dietrich Hildebrand, who worked in Burwalde, Chortitza Colony

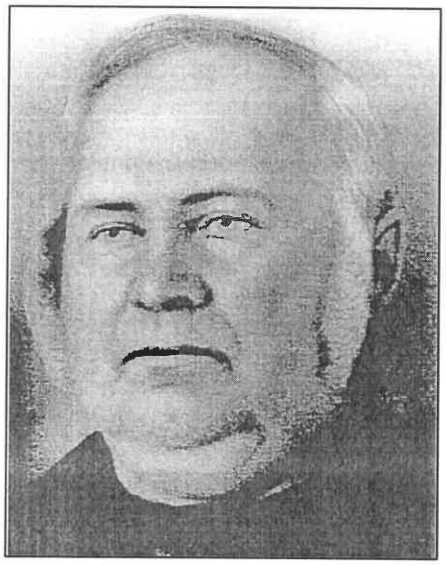
In 1875 Abraham moved his family, along with his parents and siblings' families to Mapleton, North Dakota, then in 1881 he moved to Schanzenfeld, West Reserve, Manitoba. After a brief stay he moved to Rosental, Manitoba, where he stayed the rest of his life.

Abraham became a well known as a "doctor," receiving patients from North Dakota and Manitoba, and requests for medical advice by mail. His specialty was treating cancer with poultices. Abraham apparently also received some medical education in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA.

Doctors in Morden took Hiebert to court about 1895 over the lack of license to practice in Manitoba. He was fined, but continued to practice.

It is unlikely that Abraham B Hiebert had any legitimate medical training either in Russia or in North America, though he seems to have been a successful user of folk medicine. The fact that he used poultices to treat what he thought was cancer shows that he had absolutely no idea of what he was doing. It also seems to show that many of the people who thought they had cancer probably had very little wrong with them.

Abraham B Hiebert died 5 February 1914. Wife Sara Loewen Hiebert died 10 May 1929



Abraham B Hiebert

Sara and Abraham Hiebert

GERHARD DIETRICH HILDEBRAND
BONE-SETTER

Gerhard Dietrich Hildebrand was born 4 January 1859 in Burwalde, Chortitza.. His father was "Bone-setter Hildebrand." Apparently Gerhard spent his whole life in Burwalde, so he must have had his primary schooling there. He had no official medical training.

When his father died in November1902, Gerhard took over his practice in Burwalde with great success. He was very capable, and very popular.

Gerhard owned a 400-dessiatine estate about five km north of Station Bulayevo on the Trans Siberian Railway, near Omsk. A Rempel family managed the estate.

The last day of his life Gerhard saw patients into the evening. Gerhard D Hildebrand died at 1 AM the night of 10 August 1929. His funeral was on 12 August 1929. At the funeral the priest from the neighbouring village of Rasumovka expressed his appreciation. Elder David Epp closed with the remarks "His dedication and willingness to serve have been an example for all of us."

Sources:

Toews, John B, Childbirth, Disease and Death Among the Mennonites in Nineteenth-Century Russia, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 60 (1986) pp 457

DIETRICH HILDEBRANDT
NATUROPATH AND BONE-SETTER

In 1904 Dietrich Hildebrandt and his new wife Mathilda Lehn were offered an expensive wedding feast by her parents, or one year of studies in Germany. They chose to study in Leipzig and Dresden. Wife Mathilda studied midwifery, he chose to study naturopathic medicine and herbal healing. It is a mystery why, given the chance to study proper medicine in such excellent scientific centres, he chose total quack medicine as his life's work.

The couple then returned to Russia, where Mathilda developed an extensive midwifery practice in Nikolaipol. Eventually she and her husband built a private sanitarium for their patients. They then immigrated to Canada, first settling in Rosthern, where Mathilda and presumably Dietrich practiced. In 1935 they moved to Yarrow, BC, where Dietrich continued his practice, Mathilda by this time only assisting her husband.

Sources:

Epp, Irma, Harms, Lillian, Sawatzky, Lora "Midwifery: A Ministry" p 16 in *Village of Unsettled Yearnings*, Edited by Leonard N Neufeldt, Touchwood Editions, Victoria, BC, 2002

DIETRICH (*LICHTFELDER*) WIEBE
BONE-SETTER AND MANIPULATOR

Dietrich Wiebe, "Lichtfelder Wiebe" or "Bone Setter Wiebe" Son of the original Bone Setter Wiebe

Dietrich Wiebe (or Lichtfelder Wiebe) was a bone-setter and manipulator who functioned as a full-fledged doctor in the Molotschna Colony. There is nothing to suggest that he had any formal medical education.

Dietrich had a good reputation among Mennonites, Russians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians. He did manipulations and treated many conditions with "salve and oil." The "salve and oil" was prescribed for a wide variety of ailments, even into the twentieth century, including "shrinking" of the normally oversized heads of infants. His specialty was treating cancer with poultices.

Dietrich Gaeddert mentions that he took a person, "our Jakob," to see Wiebe after he was trodden and kicked by a horse. Wiebe fixed his shoulder

On 1 October 1860 Dietrich Gaeddert's wife had torn open her finger "to the joint." After much pus came out he finally took her to Wiebe. He prescribe "salve and oil."

Wiebe passed his skills on to his sons, so that when he died about 1903, son Dietrich Dietrich Wiebe continued on the practice. Included in this practice was the ordering of "Wieben Oel" for almost all conditions, including the treatment of the normally enlarged head of infants.

Sources:

Lohrenz, Gerhard, *Heritage Remembered*, CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, Canada, 1974. p 99

Toews, John B, Childbirth, Disease and Death Among the Mennonites in Nineteenth-Century Russia, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 60 (1986) pp 454-455

Willms Family History. The Willms went to him to be sutured and dressed after the robbery of their *Wirtschaft* in September of 1926

OTHER TREATMENTS

It is difficult to be sure of what Mennonites actually did, but working on the assumption that treatments frequently advertised in the periodicals must have been followed by at least some of the population, these were some of the suggestions:

MUD BATHS seem to have been very popular

Schlammbaeder am "Roten See" was five verst outside of Berdyansk. Five trains a day brought customers to the baths where the chemical and healing powers were equal to those of other such facilities

MINERAL WATER SPAS were for "every sane person who wants to stay healthy"

It was said that 50,000 people could testify to the benefits of one spa in Riga. Some of the spas, located a little closer to the major Mennonite colonies were less outrageous in their claims

Petrovka - advertized as "*Naturheilanstalt*" owned by or operated by Jakob Loepp,

Station Bauteschevo, treated all except infectious diseases, treatment consisted of baths, including mineral baths, also had nice gardens

Wasserheilanstallt, Simferopol, Crimea - natural healing through water, electricity and massage; special treatment for inner problems, women's diseases, nervous disorders and rheumatism

HOMEOPATHY was advertised particularly by one "Apotheke" in Odessa. Homeopathy is a treatment invented by Dr Samuel Hahnemenn (1756-1843) , who postulated that any substance which can produce symptoms in a healthy person, can cure similar symptoms in a person who is sick. From the stories told, it seems that this mode of treatment was likely sought quite frequently. It should be noted that there is absolutely no basis in fact for this theory, as a matter of fact the treatment could be dangerous.

Dietrich Hildebrandt studied homeopathy when he and his wife went to Leipzig and Dresden to study for one year.

MASSAGE AND SWEDISH GYMNASTICS (*HEILGYMNASTIC*) said to help chronic stomach ailments, crooked backs, rheumatism and chronic uterine problems and headaches. Call Peter Wiens of Ladekopp, Molotschna

ALEXANDRABAD functioned somewhat like a hospital (and is listed among the hospitals), but much of the emphasis was certainly not scientific medicine. Bathing offered steam, carbonic acid or other special formulas. It claimed to treat various nervous disorders, heart stomach and kidney diseases, gout rheumatism of all kinds, diabetes and anemia as well as women's conditions. It was open all year. Dr A Pappen was the medical director.

Water, water, everywhere...

Kurort in Berdjansk

am Ufer des Asowschen Meeres

Station Berdjansk, Jekaterinenbahn.

Berdjanskaer städtische Schlammbäder am „Roten See"

5 Werst von Berdjansk. Verbindung mit der Stadt durch Zweigbahn; täglich 5 Züge; 10 Minuten Fahrt.

Saison vom 20. Mai bis 20. August.

Ihren chemischen Bestandteilen und Heilkräften nach gleichen die Salzlake und der Schlamm des Berdjaner Limans denen des Sakisee und des Odessaer Limans.

Wasserheilanstalt,

Simferopol (Krim)

gegenüber d. Kathedralkirche.

Naturheilung durch Wasser, Elektrizität, Massage. Wasserkuren: Güsse, Brausen, Packung, Wannen, Sool-, Schwefel-, Kohlensäure, elektrische u. Sonnenbäder, Lehm- u. Schlammbäder. Sommer und Winter offen. Komfortable Zimmer für Kranke, mit elektrischer Beleuchtung, gute Pflege, mäßige Preise. Spezialarzt in Wien studiert. Spezielle Behandlung von innern, Frauen- und Nervenkrankheiten, Rheumatismus etc.

Prospekte gratis.

Adresse: Симферополь, водолечебница, противъ собора.

Homöopathie!

Die homöopathische Zentralapotheke in Odessa versendet ihre Preislisten über

Haus-, Reise-, Tierapotheken, einzelne Arzneien und homöopathische Bücher

auf Verlangen sofort und gratis.

∴ Lehrern und Geistlichen bedeutender Rabatt. ∴

Die Apotheke ist im Jahre 1887 gegründet.

Wir haben unsere Apotheke vom Hause Perey, Puschkinskaja Nr. 9, nach dem Sobor-Platz, Haus Papudow, verlegt. Korrespondenzen jeglicher Art sind aber nach wie vor zu adressieren:

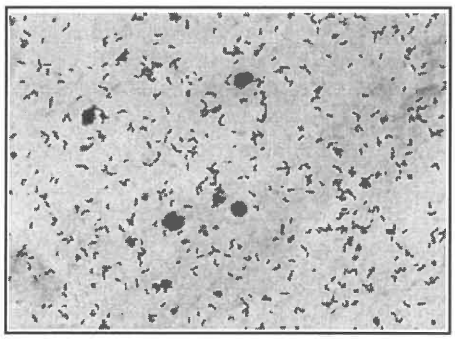
Odessa, Homöopathische Zentral-Apotheke, Herrn Apotheker Jul. Loewy.

Russisch: ОДЕССА, гомеопатическая аптека г. Ю. А. Льёви.

VIII
EPIDEMICS AND OTHER DISEASES

DIPHTHERIA

Diphtheria is an acute communicable disease caused by a bacterium - *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*. This organism chiefly infects the respiratory tract where it causes inflammation in the region of the tonsils, pharynx and larynx [throat, including the voice-box]. An exudate [fluid] is formed by these inflamed tissues, which hardens to form an adherent greyish membrane, in time gradually closing off the respiratory passages, making it harder and harder to breathe. There are also skin changes, with deep punched out ulcers. The infecting bacteria often produce a toxin [poisonous substance] which can cause myocarditis [inflammation of the heart muscle] resulting in heart failure, also neuritis which can involve the cranial nerves [nerves around the face and neck] and peripheral nerves [nerves going to the limbs].



Corynebacterium diphtheriae
[the small dark objects]

Humans are the only natural reservoir for the diphtheria organism. Spread is by close contact via droplets from breathing, or direct contact with throat secretions or skin ulcers. Unfortunately the organism can live up to six months outside the body, so dust and other particles can carry it. People actually immune to the disease may still carry the bacteria and spread it to those who are not immune. Epidemics are commonly in winter possibly due to more crowded conditions in that season. Incubation period [time from contact with the organism until disease develops] is one to seven days. Two to five year old children are the most commonly affected. Should the disease be severe enough to be fatal, death most often occurs by suffocation, sometimes as a result of heart failure.

Once the disease has started current treatment is directed toward neutralizing the toxin [using horse produced antitoxin], eliminating the organism [using antibiotics such as penicillin and erythromycin], supportive care [ensuring an airway and monitoring the heart and nerve functions], and preventing further transmission [isolation until follow up cultures grow no organisms].

The most effective treatment, prevention of diphtheria, is possible because of a series of discoveries made in the late nineteenth century. Klebs first described the bacteria in 1883. In 1884 Loeffler proved that *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* caused the disease diphtheria, growing the organism from the throats of sick people. The effect of the toxin which travelled to the rest of the body was proven in 1888 by Roux and Yersin. These investigations led to the development of active immunization by a neutralized toxin [1913] and then a toxoid [formalin treated toxin], which were the basis for the near eradication of the widespread disease. Vaccination with the diphtheria toxoid was first introduced in the 1920s and 1930s; in most western countries diphtheria has been virtually eliminated. In the United States there were 147,991 cases in 1920, 15,536 in 1940, and only 40 cases between 1980 and 1993. In time vaccine produced immunity wanes, so that revaccination of adults may be necessary.

Obviously the nature of the disease was not understood when the epidemics spread through the Mennonite colonies of Russia in the 1880s. There was no active treatment available. The only measure which may have helped control epidemics was the closure of schools, which was mentioned on a number of occasions. It is likely, however, that the schools closed because there were not enough students to keep the classes open, not to prevent the spread of disease!

Sources:

Correspondent, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 15 January 1882, p 1
Correspondent, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 19 December 1888, p 1
Dueck, Bernhard, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 3 April 1889, p 1
Enns, Jakob, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 20 March 1889, p 1
Ens, Isaak, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 20 March 1889, p 1
Neufeld, Jakob, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 27 February 1889, p 9
News Reports, *Nebraska Ansiedler*, May 1880, p 3
Sudermann, Johann, Letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 13 Mar 1889, p 1

WORLDWIDE EPIDEMICS

There was also considerable disease in other areas of Russia, not only in the Mennonite colonies. Odessa was a large port on the Black Sea, south and west of the major colonies. The *Odessaer Zeitung* regularly reported cases of infectious diseases diagnosed by the department of health in the city. In a three week period of late October to early November 1888 there were 24 cases of diphtheria and 18 of scarlet fever, many resulting in death.

Diphtheria was a world-wide epidemic disease, as shown by news items from other regions of the world where Mennonites lived.. The July 1, 1881 *Die Mennonitische Rundschau* carried a news item from Minnesota surrounded by a black border. It announced the deaths of 12 children from diphtheria, varying in age from three to twenty years. Nine were girls, three boys. The Isaak Dueck family lost five children within five days.

Sources:

News Item, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 1 July 1881, p 3
News Items, *Die Odessaer Zeitung*, 28 October [November 9] 1888, p 3; 10[22] November 1888, p 3
17[29] November 1888, p 3

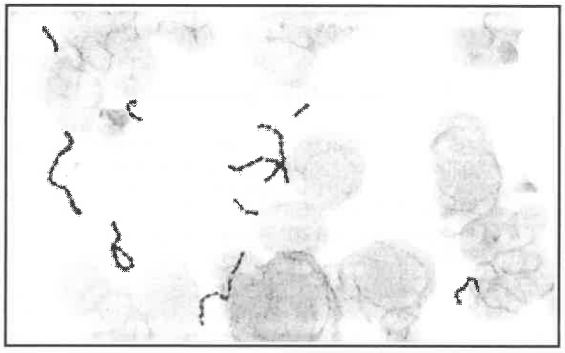
SCARLET FEVER

Scarlet fever is an acute streptococcal infection that may be localized to the respiratory tract, skin and soft tissues. During the last 30 to 40 years outbreaks in the western world have been fairly mild, but in the latter half of the nineteenth century mortality rates of 25-35% were common.

There is usually an initial sore throat, soon becoming extremely hyperemic [red due to inflammation and increased blood flow] and swollen. The whole area, including throat, tonsils and neck lymph nodes become inflamed. There is marked fever, headache, delirium and there may be convulsions. Within 24-48 hours there is a reddish rash, beginning on the trunk, spreading to the limbs, but typically not involving the area around the mouth. There may be septic scarlet fever where there is local invasion of tissues mainly about the neck, with airway obstruction, ear infection, inflammation of the lining of the brain, mastoid infection and possibly pneumonia. Patients often succumb after two or three weeks. Toxic scarlet fever moves more rapidly, with severe fever and uncontrolled convulsions commonly causing death within 24 hours.

Current therapy consists of early and massive antibiotic treatment, the streptococci being effectively killed by penicillin. Supportive treatment such as monitoring and assisting breathing is also carried out.

In the 1880s, that is, during the time of the Mennonites in Russia, antibiotics were, of course, not available. Penicillin was first discovered in 1929, and did not come into general use for approximately another decade after that.



Streptococci
Organisms are the dark chains
Large spheres are red blood cells

Sources:
McClatchey, Kenneth D., *Clinical Laboratory Medicine,* Williams and Wilkins, 1994, p 1118
Scarlet Fever in *Infectious Diseases,* J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 5th Edition, 1994, pp 354-355
Streptococcal Infections in *Cecil Textbook of Medicine,* W. B. Saunders Company, 20th Edition, 1996, p 1587

EPIDEMIC IN SOUTH RUSSIA
WINTER 1888 - 1889

Infectious diseases were part of the cycle of life and death in earlier times. World-wide causes of death among children were diphtheria and scarlet fever, although children also shared typhus, small pox and tuberculosis with the adults. Mennonites were not immune to these diseases. Winter appears to have been high season for infections to occur. The idea that these were contagious diseases does not seem to have entered the minds of the people.

Probably the most widespread and virulent epidemic affected the South Russian colonies in late 1888 and early 1889. In the Molotschna Colony the village of Hamberg reported that "diphtheria reigns; in one week thirteen children died, also one adult." A correspondent from Schoensee reported diphtheria to be in many villages, with quite a few children dying. In Ohrloff the school was closed because of the epidemic.

At the same time scarlet fever also raged. Three children of Johann Mierau died in Tiege, as well as one child of Jacob Willms. In the correspondents's home three children had just recovered from the disease, and one had come down with it the day before the letter was written.

The 1888-1889 epidemic was not confined to the Molotschna . Isaak Ens of Alexanderthal, Fuerstenland Colony reported "Our state of health is satisfactory, only the children have been quite ill, with many a small pilgrim having been called to the great beyond." In Tiegehhof, an estate north of the Molotschna, Jakob Enns reported that the Giesbrechts had lost three children. The school was closed because of the epidemic. Jakob philosophized "Jesus now and then knocks at out heart's door. But not all the news was bad. Bernhard Dueck of Friedensfeld, Borozenko Colony, reported that " in our region we have had no epidemic this winter." The fact that Dueck considers the absence of an epidemic to be newsworthy tells us how common the diseases were.

By and large it seems to have been accepted that most winters would bring the cycle of infectious diseases, causing many deaths among the children. This was expected to the extent that most correspondents did not even mention children in their lists of deaths in the community. Those who did include them never mentioned them by Christian name.

The winter of 1888-1889 seems to have been one of the worst for the young citizens of the South Russian Mennonite colonies.

Sources:

Correspondent, letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 15 January 1882, p 1
Correspondent, letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 19 December 1888, p 1
Dueck, Bernhard, letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 3 April 1889, p 1
Enns, Jakob, letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 20 March 1889, p 1
Ens, Isaak, letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 20 March 1889, p 1
Neufeld, Jakob, letter,*Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 27 February 1889, p 9
News Reports, *Nebraska Ansiedler*, May 1880, p 3
Sudermann, Johann, letter, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, 13 March 1889, p 1

TYPHUS
(EPIDEMIC AND ENDEMIC)

Typhus has played a significant role in the history of the past four or five of centuries. It often followed in the wake of wars, famines and human misfortunes, and sometimes had a more decisive effect on military campaigns than the actual battles themselves. During Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in 1812, more French soldiers died of typhus than were killed by the Russians. Typhus epidemics of Eastern Europe and Russia between 1918 and 1922 are estimated to have involved 30,000,000 cases and at least 3,000,000 deaths. Mennonites, particularly those in the Chortitza and Yazykovo Colonies, were among those most suffering in this epidemic. Dr Hermann Meder died of typhus in December of 1917, and Dr David Abraham Hamm of Chortitza succumbed some time around 1919 or 1920. Dr Erich Tavonius, surgeon at the Muntau Hospital, contracted typhus in 1920, but "Thanks to God's grace" recovered, although the sequels of a weakened heart and a nervous tremor remained.

Typhus is caused by a *Rickettsia* organism. Epidemic Typhus is caused by *Rickettsia prowazekii* and is basically spread by the human louse. Endemic Typhus is caused by *Rickettsia typhi*, and is spread by fleas on rats. For many years typhus and typhoid fever were considered to be the same disease, but in 1837 Gerhard of Philadelphia showed that they were two distinctly different conditions. It was not until 1916 that da Rocha Lima definitely proved that *Rickettsia prowazekii* caused epidemic typhus.

Clinically the incubation period is commonly one to two weeks. Onset is usually abrupt, and consists of a fever, headache and rash. The fever may go as high as 104° F or 40° C. The headache is intense, and persists day and night. The rash is on the trunk, extending to the extremities. In fatal cases there may be profound stupor, peripheral vascular collapse and severe renal failure.

The Mennonite population which suffered from typhus probably was subjected to both the Epidemic and Endemic forms. They were living under difficult circumstances, were often near starvation, yet had to house bandits and soldiers, who were often louse infested. . They were being threatened with violent physical abuse and murder so it was difficult to keep the household clean and well organized, therefore rats might have been a problem.

A number of fairly detailed reports outlined the severity of the problem. Typhus broke out in Osterwick, Chortitza in November 1919. In total 157 individuals died, 1,200 had the disease but recovered, and somewhat over 350 people were well throughout. There were many homes where no-one was well enough to care for the sick; there were 12 house-holds where everyone had died. The writer of the report concluded "It was a terrible winter."

In the whole village of Neuenburg there were only four men who were not sick with typhus. The same situation applied in Rosengard, Burwalde, Blumengard and Nieder-Chortitza. In the Yazykovo village of Eichenfeld 79 men and four women were murdered by the Makhno bandits. Of the remaining widows, 22 suffered from typhus.

In Chortitza village, with a total population of 676, there were 349 males, 327 females. Between November 1919 and 1 March 1920, 85 men died of typhus, representing 24%; 62 women died, 19 %. Nine children age five and under also died. It was noted that doctors were actually among the first to come down with the disease. Despite the obvious danger to himself, Dr Theodor Hottmann helped many of those who were ill or dying in Chortitza in 1919-1920. He actually

bought a house in the middle of Chortitza where he and his wife Maria then lived.

Between the brutality and cruelty of bandits, the starvation, and the very severe physical illnesses during this time, it is a wonder that anyone survived to tell the tale!

Sources:
Berg, Johann and Elisabeth, Letter from Osterwick, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau* 21 September, 1921, pp 11, 12
Cecil - Loeb *Textbook of Medicine*, Rickettsial Diseases, pp 471-473
Correspondent, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, Neuenburg, 6 April 1921, p 11
Correspondent, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, Describing Chortitza, 12 April 1922, p 7
Correspondent, *DieMennonitische Rundschau*, Died of Typhus November 1919 to 1 March 1920, 19 July 1922, pp 4, 5, 6
News Report, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, *20,000,000 Typhusfaelle in Russland*, 8 March 1922 p 10
Sigerist, Henry E, *Civilization and Disease*, Phoenix Books, University of Chicago Press, 1943, pp 118-121

TYPHOID FEVER

Typhoid Fever is an acute, often severe, illness caused by a bacterium, *Salmonella typhosa*. It is characterized by a high fever, headache, apathy, cough, enlarged spleen, a maculopapular rash and a low white cell count. Patients with typhoid fever excrete a large number of bacillae in faeces or urine, so the disease is spread mostly by contaminated water, such as sewage, ice or dust. Recovered patients can continue to carry the organism for considerable lengths of time; these "carriers" often contaminate food supplies for long periods of time. Because of the chaotic conditions common with war and revolution, typhoid fever epidemics may be common under such circumstances, much like typhus epidemics.

The symptoms of typhus and typhoid fever are similar, so it was not until 1837 that it was discovered that they were two different diseases. During the time of the severe epidemic of typhus in Russia 1919 to 1922, there was some typhoid fever among the Mennonites, but there was no widespread epidemic. Dr Johann Jakob Dyck was recorded as dying of typhoid fever in 1920

Sources:
Cecil - Loeb *Textbook of Medicine*, Diseases Caused by Salmonella. Typhoid Fever, pp 574-577

TUBERCULOSIS

Tuberculosis is a common and often deadly infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis in humans. The lungs are most commonly first attacked, but it can also affect other regions such as bones, kidneys, bowel and lymph nodes. By far the most frequent spread is through the air by coughing or sneezing, although it can also involve the bowel, through infected milk. Tuberculosis is more common in crowded conditions, with poor hygiene and diet. Infections are often first asymptomatic, but then the disease gradually progresses.

Classic symptoms are chronic cough, blood tinged sputum, fever, sweating at night, weight loss and gradual decrease in strength. Involvement of joints can cause loss of use of the joint. Spinal tuberculosis can result in a hump-back deformity, but also paralysis below that level (Pott's Paraplegia).

Current diagnosis can be made with Xrays, blood tests, and analysis of body fluids such as sputum. Specific diagnosis is made by identifying the infective organism. It must be remembered that this organism was first identified by Robert Koch on 24 March 1882. His work was remarkable in that he found the organism, invented a culture medium on which it could be grown and reproduced the disease in animals, all within one year.

Effective treatment for tuberculosis eventually was possible with appropriate surgery and antibiotics. But that had to wait until the 1940s.

Mennonites in Russia commonly suffered from tuberculosis. People with a persistent cough, and with gradual loss of weight and strength, most often had tuberculosis. The lay term used was "consumption" or "*Schwinsucht*" (*schwinsuechtig*). A slow lingering death was the almost inevitable conclusion. Adults who died at a relatively young age, complaining of increasing weakness and a chronic cough, most often had tuberculosis.

A small number of people seeking to migrate to Canada in the 1920s were delayed because they had tuberculosis, and a few were later confined to sanitoria in Canada because of the disease.

Sources:

Boyd, William, *A Text-book Of Pathology*, Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, 1953, pp 137-140

Epp, Frank H, *Mennonite Exodus*, Canadiian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, Altona, Manitoba, pp 168, 210- 211, 411

Huebert, Helmut T, *Hierschau:An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, 72

TRACHOMA

Trachoma was the single most common disease which complicated the emigration of Mennonites from Russia to Canada in the 1920s. At the time of emigration there was no known effective cure for the condition. Initially up to 25% of the migrants were rejected by the Canadian doctors because of active disease or scarring from previous involvement.

Trachoma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the eye caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis*, an organism in character somewhere between bacteria and virus. The disease occurs especially in crowded circumstances, with poor sanitation, being transmitted by personal contact with infected eye secretions or by the common use of towels. It is almost a universal condition in the Middle East (especially Egypt), and has spread to Asia, including India, Africa as well as Central and South America. Globally about 41 million people suffer from this disease, with nearly eight million having visual impairment. It is one of the oldest diseases known to man, and the most common single cause of blindness in the world.

In trachoma the conjunctiva (outer lining of the outside of the eye) becomes thickened and roughened. Later little lumps, like grains of sand, appear, and scars form. This may cause the eyelids to buckle, especially the upper one. The condition may also spread to the cornea, causing blood vessels and scarring to grow in. Both the deformity of the eyelids and the corneal involvement may cause blindness.

In 1957 the trachoma organism was first grown in the laboratory, allowing study and development of treatment modalities. Sulfa drugs are curative for this condition as well as some antibiotics. Tetracycline and erythromycin may be used orally or topically, often requiring up to 18 months of treatment. The only treatment in the 1920s was prevention, such as improved sanitation, strict quarantine, especially prohibiting the use of common towels. One can certainly understand the reluctance of the Canadian government to accept immigrants with active trachoma at that time. Surgery would consist of removing the deforming scar tissue from the eyelid, but it was definitely not a cure for the disease.

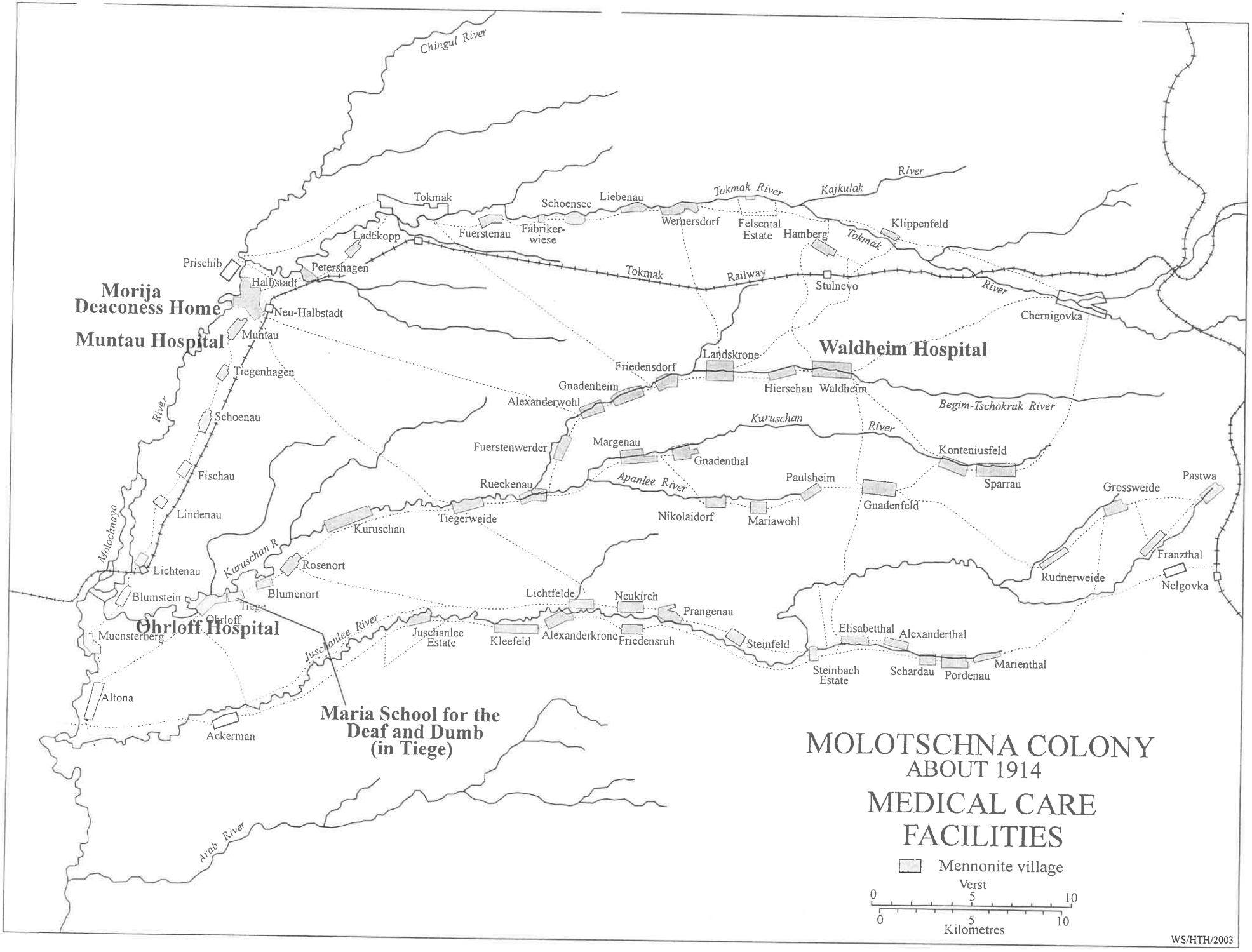
Sources:

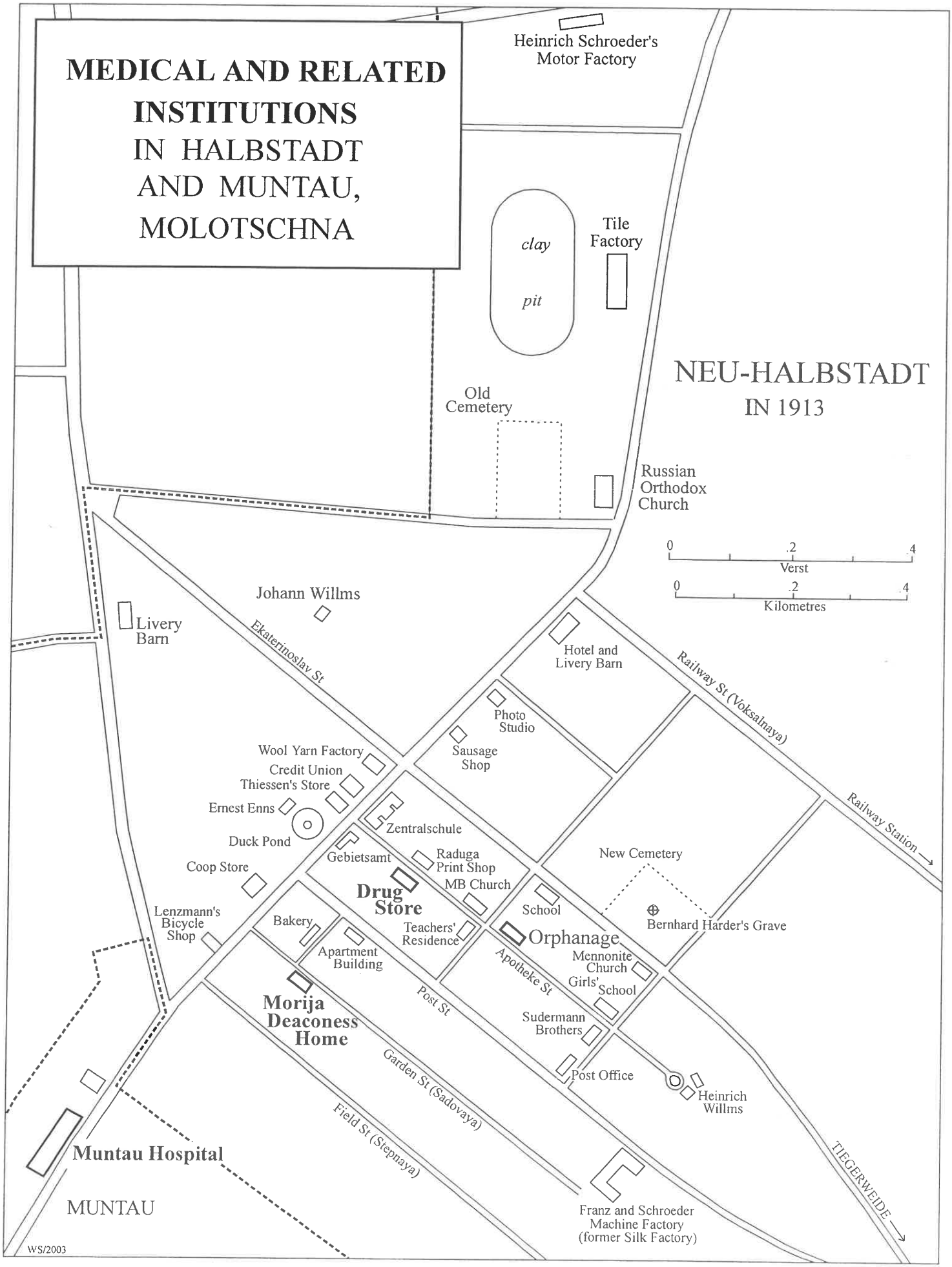
Encuclopedia Britanica, 15th edition, Maro, 7, p 118, X, p 80

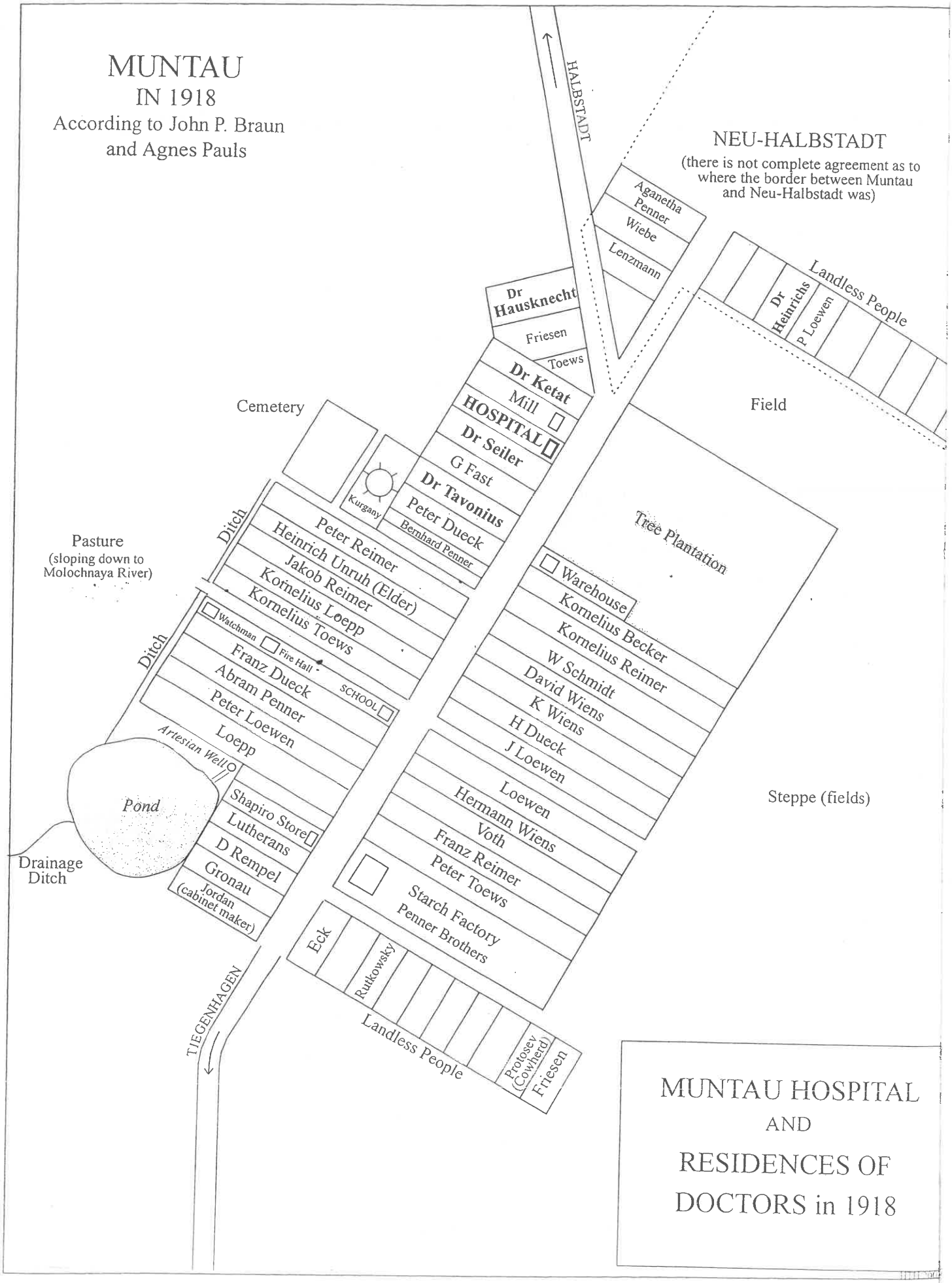
Epp, Frank H, *Mennonite Exodus*, Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, Altona Manitoba, pp 140, 143, 168, 174, 341

Huebert, Helmut T, *Hierschau: An Example of Russian Mennonite Life*, Springfield Publishers, Winnipeg, Canada, 1986, pp 286, 288, 291

Wilson, Lewis A, Editor, *External Diseases of the Eye*, Harper and Row, Hagerstown, USA, 1979, pp 64-69. Apparently there have been few new developments since that time.


Chingul River
Tokmak
Schoensee
Liebenau
Tokmak River
Kajkulak River
Wernersdorf
Felsental Estate
Hamberg
Klippenfeld
Tokmak
Ladekopp
Fuerstenau
Fabriker-wiese
Prischib
Petershagen
Halbstadt
Tokmak Railway
Stulnevo
Morija Deaconess Home
Muntau Hospital
Neu-Halbstadt
Muntau
Chernigovka
River
Waldheim Hospital
Landskrone
Friedensdorf
Tiegenhagen
Gnadenheim
Hierschau
Waldheim
Alexanderwohl
Begim-Tschokrak River
Kuruschan River
Schoenau
River
Fuerstenwerder
Margenau
Gnadenthal
Konteniusfeld
Fischau
Rueckenau
Apanlee River
Paulsheim
Sparrau
Grossweide
Pastwa
Lindenau
Tiegerweide
Nikolaidorf
Mariawohl
Gnadenfeld
Molochnaya
Kuruschan
Kuruschan R
Rosenort
Franzthal
Lichtenau
Rudnerweide
Nelgovka
Blumstein
Blumenort
Lichtfelde
Neukirch
Prangenau
Tiege
Ohrloff
Ohrloff Hospital
Muensterberg
Juschanlee River
Juschanlee Estate
Kleefeld
Alexanderkrone
Friedensruh
Steinfeld
Elisabetthal
Alexanderthal
Steinbach Estate
Schardau
Pordenau
Marienthal
Altona
Maria School for the Deaf and Dumb (in Tiege)
Ackerman
Arab River
MOLOTSCHNA COLONY
ABOUT 1914
MEDICAL CARE FACILITIES
Mennonite village
Verst
0 5 10
0 5 10
Kilometres
WS/HTH/2003


MEDICAL AND RELATED INSTITUTIONS IN HALBSTADT AND MUNTAU, MOLOTSCHNA
Heinrich Schroeder's Motor Factory
clay pit
Tile Factory
NEU-HALBSTADT IN 1913
Old Cemetery
Russian Orthodox Church
0 .2 4 Verst
0 .2 4 Kilometres
Johann Willms
Livery Barn
Ekaterinoslav St
Hotel and Livery Barn
Railway St (Voksalnaya)
Photo Studio
Sausage Shop
Wool Yarn Factory
Credit Union
Thiessen's Store
Ernest Enns
Duck Pond
Zentralschule
Railway Station
Gebietsamt
Raduga Print Shop
MB Church
Coop Store
Drug Store
New Cemetery
Lenzmann's Bicycle Shop
Bakery
School
Bernhard Harder's Grave
Teachers' Residence
Orphanage
Apartment Building
Mennonite Church
Apotheke St
Girls' School
Post St
Morija Deaconess Home
Sudermann Brothers
Garden St (Sadovaya)
Post Office
Heinrich Willms
Field St (Stepnaya)
Muntau Hospital
TIEGERWEIDE
MUNTAU
Franz and Schroeder Machine Factory (former Silk Factory)
WS/2003


MUNTAU
IN 1918
According to John P. Braun
and Agnes Pauls
HALBSTADT
NEU-HALBSTADT
(there is not complete agreement as to where the border between Muntau and Neu-Halbstadt was)
Aganetha Penner
Wiebe
Lenzmann
Dr Hausknecht
Friesen
Toews
Dr Ketat
Mill
HOSPITAL
Dr Seiler
G Fast
Dr Tavonius
Peter Dueck
Bernhard Penner
Dr Heinrichs
P Loewen
Landless People
Cemetery
Field
Kurgany
Ditch
Pasture
(sloping down to Molochnaya River)
Peter Reimer
Heinrich Unruh (Elder)
Jakob Reimer
Kornelius Loepp
Kornelius Toews
Tree Plantation
Warehouse
Kornelius Becker
Kornelius Reimer
W Schmidt
David Wiens
K Wiens
H Dueck
J Loewen
Loewen
Hermann Wiens
Voth
Franz Reimer
Peter Toews
Starch Factory
Penner Brothers
Watchman
Fire Hall
SCHOOL
Franz Dueck
Abram Penner
Peter Loewen
Loepp
Artesian Well
Pond
Shapiro Store
Lutherans
D Rempel
Gronau
Jordan
(cabinet maker)
Drainage Ditch
Steppe (fields)
Eck
Rutkowsky
Landless People
Protosev
(Cowherd)
Friesen
TIEGENHAGEN
MUNTAU HOSPITAL
AND
RESIDENCES OF
DOCTORS in 1918